▪ MARTIN BARRE ▪ STEVE VAI ▪ GARY MOORE ▪ BOB SEGER ▪

GUITARTRICKS INSIDER

DIGITAL EDITION

OCTOBER
NOVEMBER

JOE BONAMASSA

A TRIPLE PLAY: LEARNING, LISTENING & PLAYING

JEFF BECK REMEMBERS "WHERE WERE YOU"

BOB WEIR RHYTHM GUITAR MASTER

STING ON SONGWRITING

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\+ ALL THE DIRT ON DISTORTED TONES

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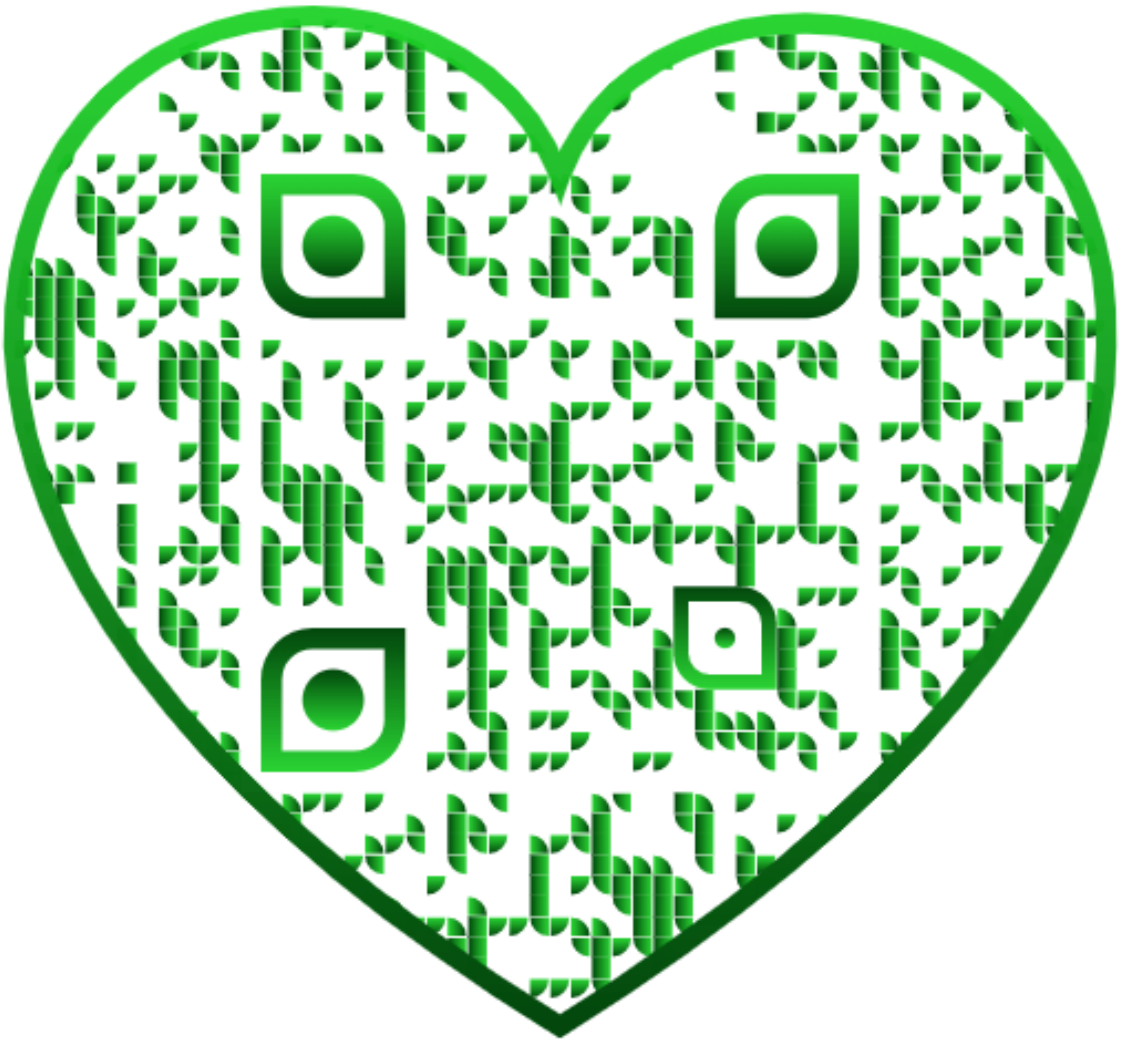
THE FIRST SONG I LEARNED: BUDDY GUY, JASON BECKER, ZAKK WYLDE



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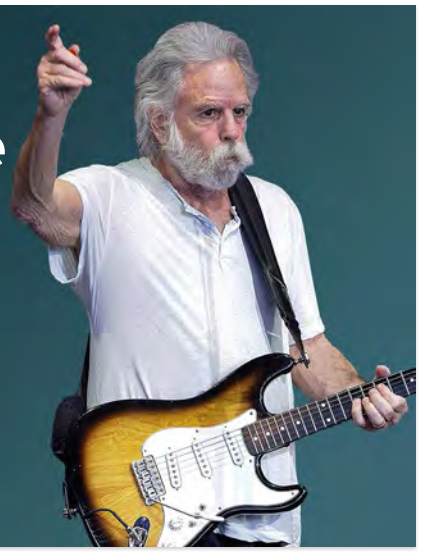

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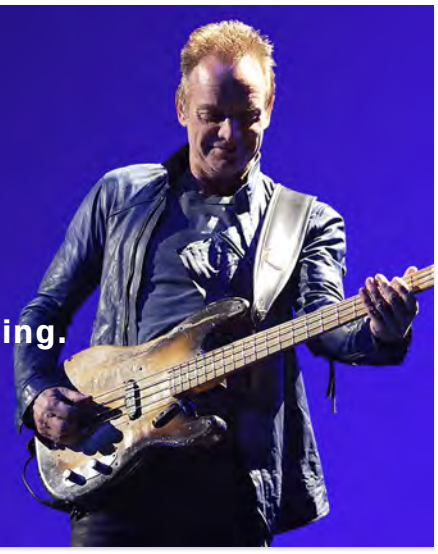

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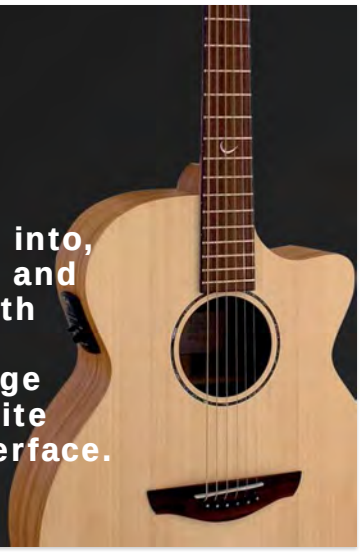

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MARTIN BARRE
(JETHRO TULL)

by **John Stix**

To most people Ian Anderson is Jethro Tull. Literally and figuratively he was both captain and navigator for Tull since its conception in the late 60s. But for over 40 years his first mate was guitarist Martin Barre. Starting with the *Stand Up* album, Martin Barre captivated Tull fans with his unique brand of parts playing and soloing. His style is melodic rockin' blues lines played over non-blues changes, and sculpted with architectural editing skills. When it comes to Hall of Fame playing Barre could have gone home after his improvised one take solo in "Aqualung." Today, with Tull on extended hiatus, Barre continues as a solo artist playing the classic Tull songs and originals. His newest recording is titled *Back to Steel*. His list of essential albums reflects a kaleidoscope view of rock guitar.

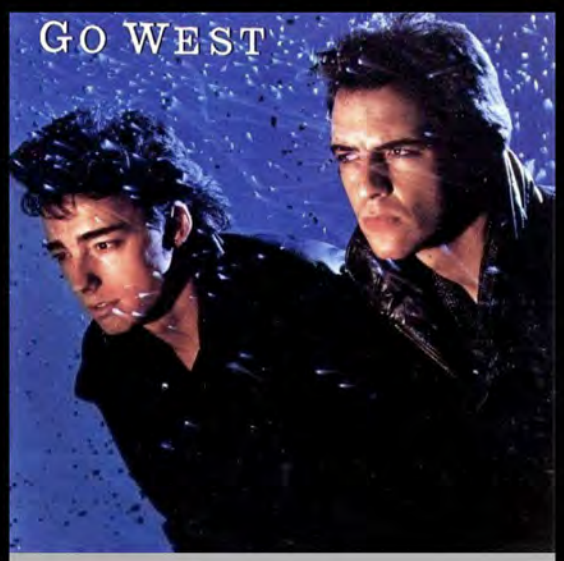
Martin Barre by Neil Zlozower - Atlas Icons

Martin Barre by Paul Natkin

01.

Dr Hee
Scott Henderson and Tribal Tech

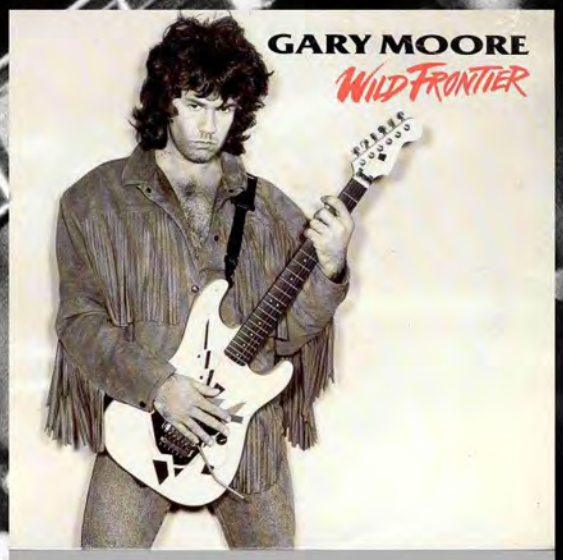
Available at amazon



02.

Go West
Go West

Get it on iTunes



03.

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Gary Moore

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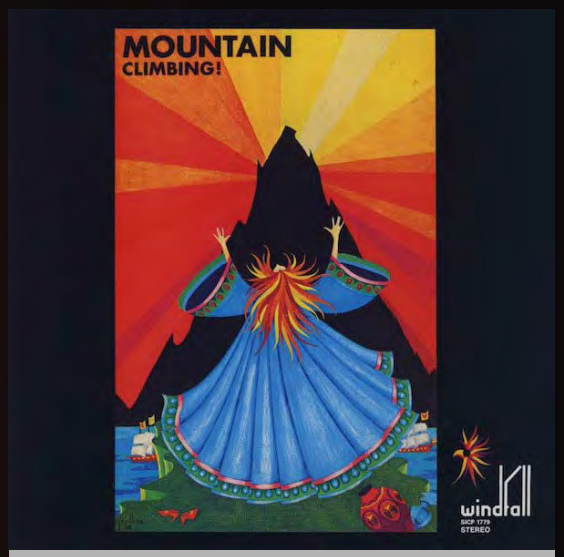
04.

Telecasting
Jerry Donahue

Available at amazon

Martin Barre by Neil Zlozower - Atlas Icons



05.

Mountain Climbing
Mountain

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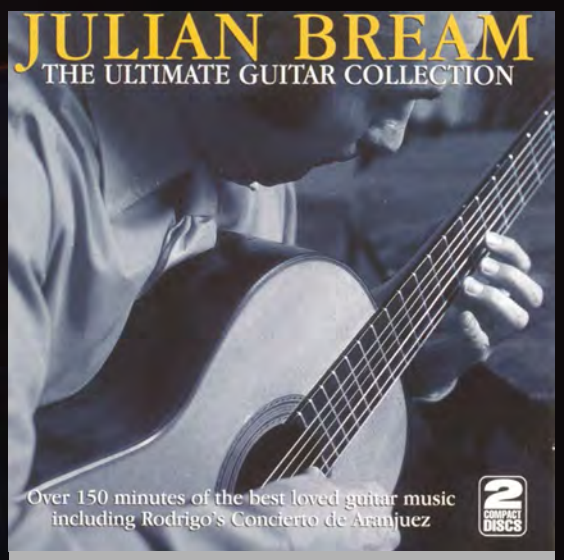

06.

Julian Bream: The Ultimate Guitar Collection
Julian Bream

Available at amazon

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Steve Vai is imagination unleashed. He is a guitarist of seemingly unlimited technique. But because he is a master composer, all this musical muscle flexing is in service to a song. Imagine something silly enough to make you laugh out loud or touching enough to make you cry. Steve Vai has made a career of writing then playing music designed to make you feel something that special. That he uses the guitar as his main voice has stretched its vocabulary in ways few other players have even contemplated. To celebrate the 25th Anniversary of his masterpiece *Passion & Warfare*, Steve remastered the original recording and added a whole new disc of tunes he had composed but never recorded, dating from between *Flex -Able and Passion*. To learn more about what Steve Vai likes to hear, spend a moment with his list of essential albums. ■

Steve Vai by Robert Knight

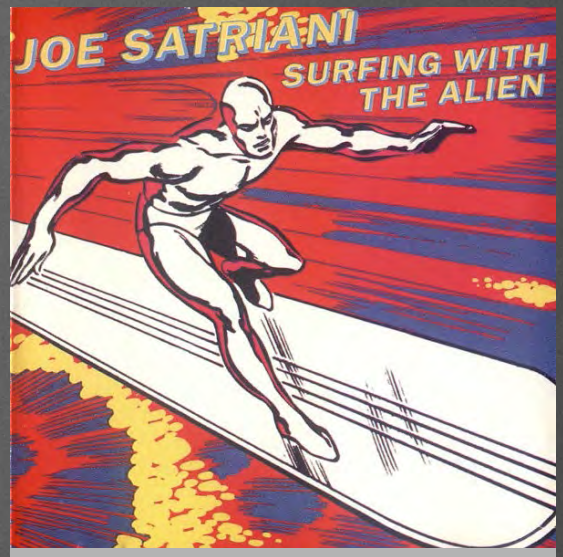
01.

Breakfast in the Fields
Michael Hedges

Get it on iTunes

STEVE VAI

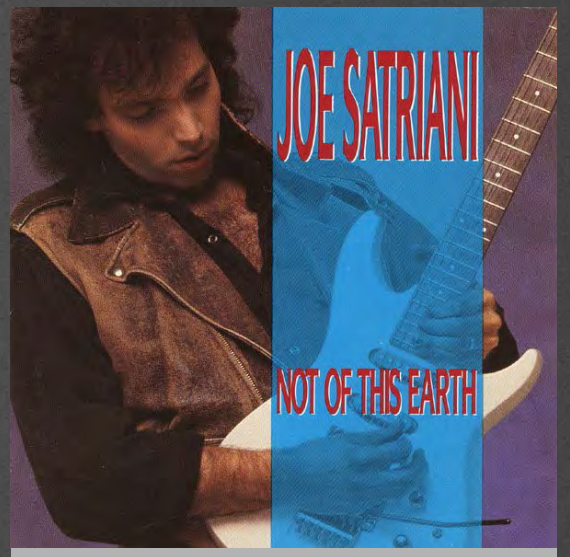
by **John Stix**



02.

Surfing with the Alien
Joe Satriani

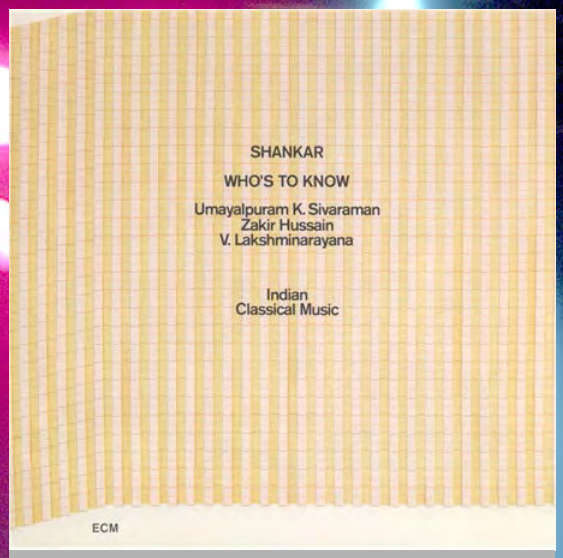
Get it on iTunes



03.

Not of this Earth
Joe Satriani

Get it on iTunes



04.

Who's to Know
Shankar

Get it on iTunes

05.

Van Halen
Van Halen

Get it on iTunes

06.

Led Zeppelin II
Led Zeppelin

Get it on iTunes

Steve Vai by Paul Natkin

IF YOU'RE AFRAID
TO GO
AGAINST
THE GRAIN
& PUSH
THE BOUNDARIES
OF WHAT IS
COMMONLY ACCEPTED
AS ARTISTRY,
YOU'LL
NEVER
GET PAST
MEDIOCRE.

SURROUND
YOURSELF
WITH
TOOLS
THAT WILL
INSPIRE
YOU
TO BE
ORIGINAL,
BY
SETTING
AN EXAMPLE
THEMSELVES.

REVEREND
WELL PLAYED

I know Dire Straits when I hear them. All the fills here are just right. “Sultans of Swing” is still the prime example of the way Mark plays. He’s out there on his own, almost like an 80’s Hank Marvin or Peter Green. He’s got that pure thing about his playing. It’s so uncluttered. Every note he plays is crystal clear. It’s great to see someone play like that and have the courage to play, without worrying about different effects, or how to be a heavy metal guitar hero, and yet, come across as a musician. He’s a very mature player. If you use a sound which is really you, you’ll overcome that heavy metal dirge of distortion and shine out as an individual player, which is what Mark Knopfler does. It’s also what I hope to do. ■

GARY MOORE

ON “LADY WRITER” BY DIRE STRAITS

by **John Stix**

Gary Moore 1984 by Neil Zlozower - Atlas Icons

“He’s got that pure thing about his playing. It’s so uncluttered. Every note he plays is crystal clear. It’s great to see someone play like that.”

“Lady Writer” by Dire Straits

NUGGETS: 8 ACOUSTIC BLUES TURNAROUNDS

By **Dave Rubin**

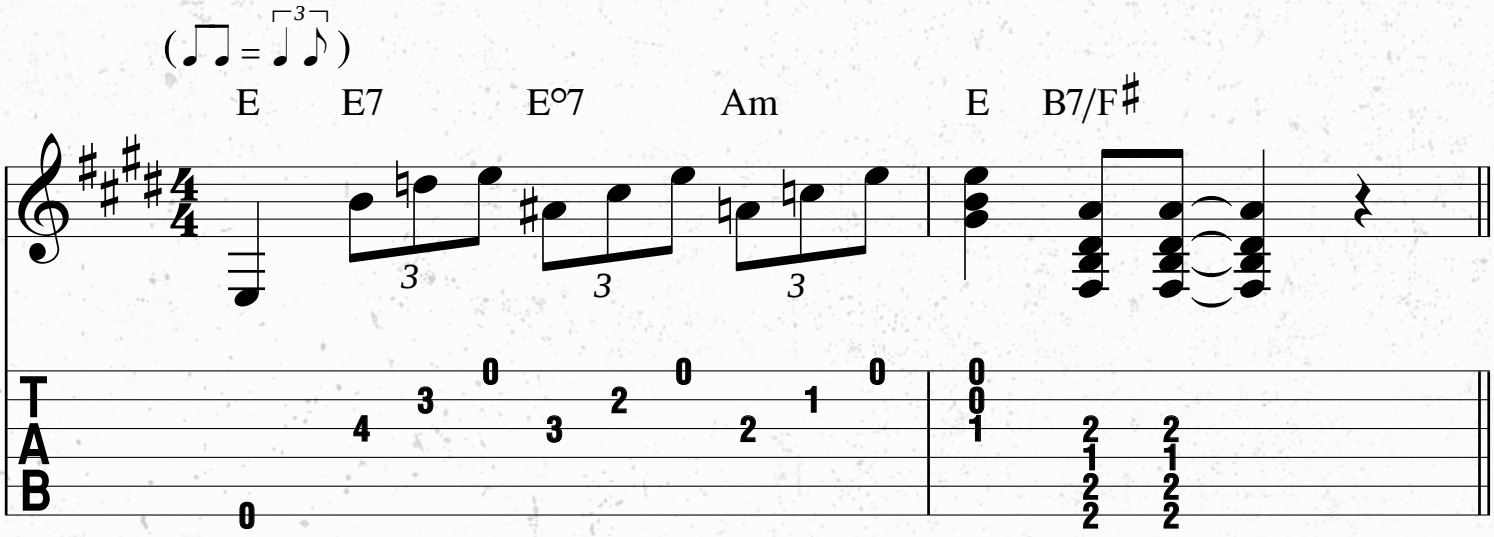
12-bar blues are a musical and metaphorical journey with a beginning, middle, and end. But while comparing them to an odyssey might be a literary conceit, they do offer a literal chance to start over, following a turnaround, in measures 11 and 12, when it is desired to continue to another verse. Through what has evolved musically as a brilliant, versatile arrangement of I, IV and V chord changes, with substitutions when chosen, the pattern moves from the I to resolution on the V, the chord which theoretically produces anticipation and forward motion back to the I. To quote Steely Dan: "You go back, Jack, do it again."

Classic turnaround patterns add a hip stamp of authenticity for blues guitarists and rock guitarists playing the blues. By knowing the following eight examples, you will be able navigate the crucial last two measures of a 12-bar blues with knowing swagger. Note that all are based on slow acoustic blues at 60-72 BPM in the standard Delta blues keys of E, A, and G, but could be adapted to faster tempos, and for the electric guitar, naturally. Fingerstyle or hybrid picking is recommended, and in some examples, a necessity.

In 2003, I had the pleasure of co-authoring a book for the Hal Leonard Corporation, comprised of turnarounds with blues guitarist extraordinaire, Rusty Zinn. The book contains 72 patterns. ■

Along with teaching private lessons in NYC, **Dave Rubin** has written over 100 blues, classic rock, jazz, and country guitar books for the Hal Leonard Corporation. His latest is Inside Rock Guitar: Four Decades of the Greatest Electric Rock Guitarists. **www.musicdispatch.com**

FIG. 1



Though he was not the first to record descending chordal turnarounds, Robert Johnson certainly helped to popularize them. **FIG. 1** incorporates string 1 open as a chiming, high E "pedal tone" in a manner he sometimes favored.

FIG. 2

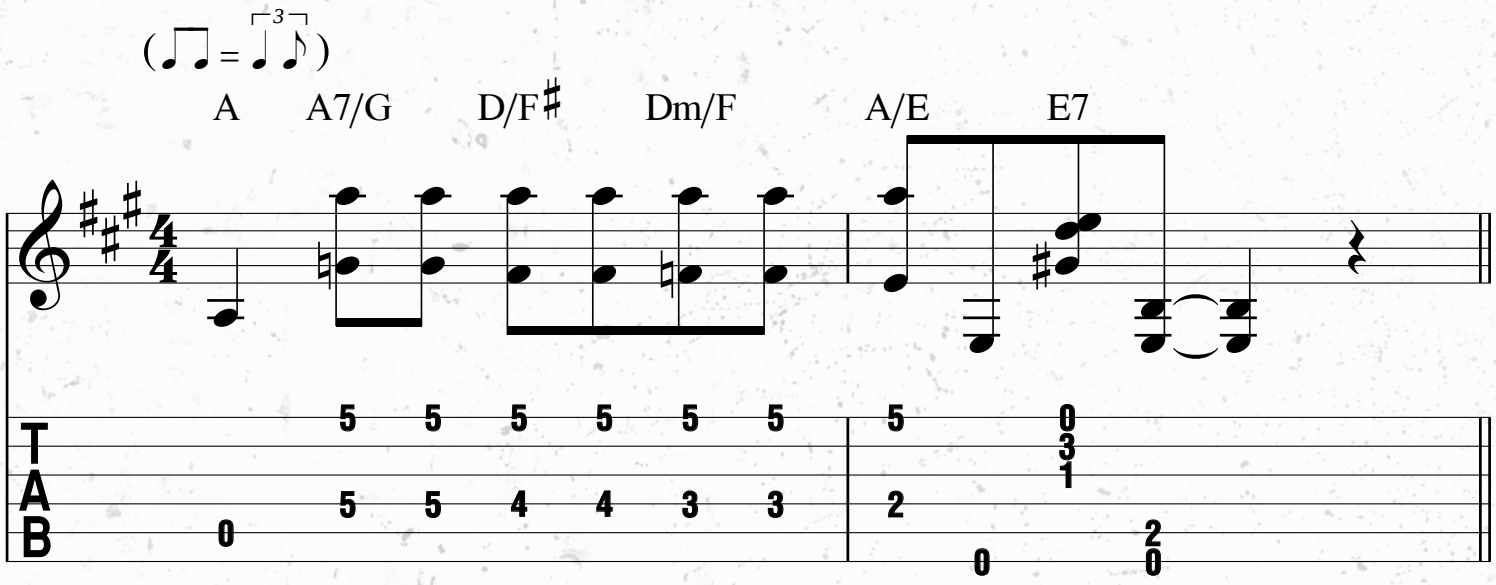


FIG. 2 shows a pattern utilized by Johnson in several of his timeless compositions. Again, the root A note on the top string at fret 5 functions as a "pedal tone." Be aware how this example is easily moveable to other keys. **Performance Tip:** Utilize the pinky for the high A and "walk" down string 4 with the ring, middle, and index fingers. Likewise, also employ the index for the E note on string 4 in measure 2. Either hybrid picking or fingerstyle with the thumb and index is required to execute the double stops.

FIG. 3

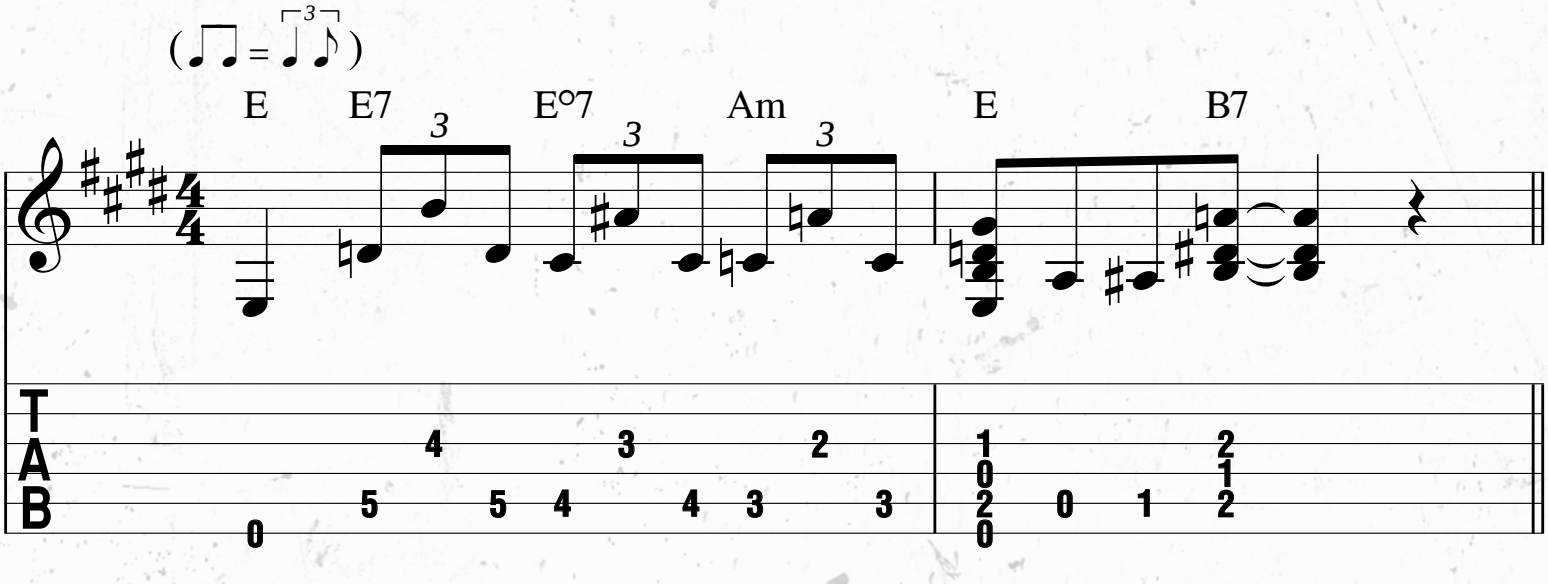


FIG. 3 is arguably the most common country blues turnaround in the key of E. Performance Tip: May be played with a flat pick if desired.

FIG. 4

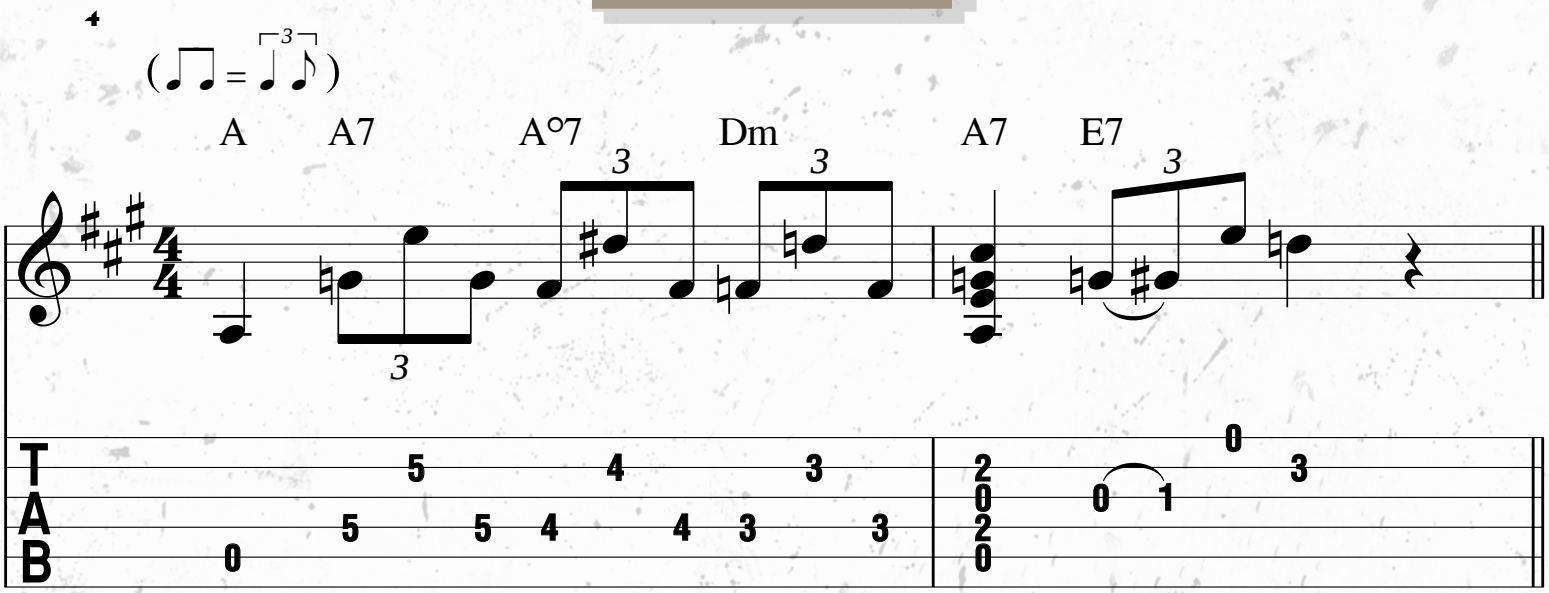
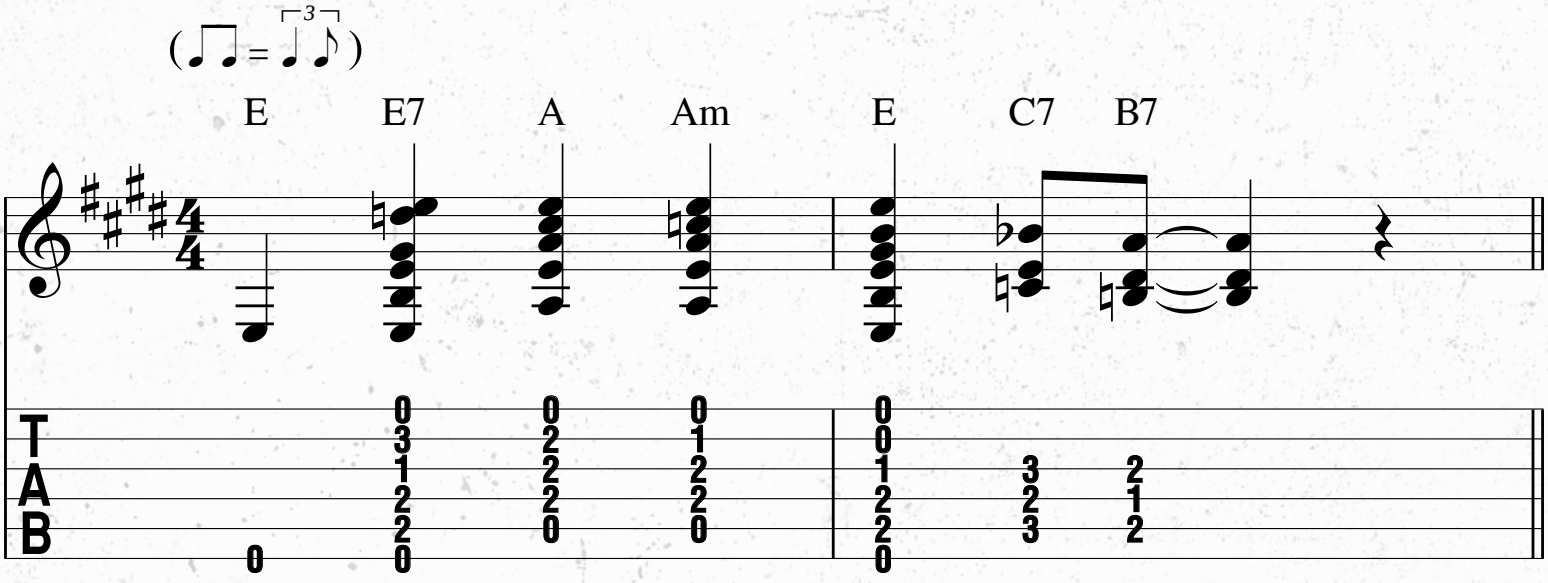


FIG. 4 in the key of A is the counterpart to Fig. 3. Observe the idiomatic "broken E7 chord" blues lick in measure 2, indicating resolution to the V chord. Performance Tip: An index finger barre on strings 4-2 could be employed for beats 2-4 in measure 1 while, low to high, the ring/pinky, ring/pinky and middle/ring descend from fret 5. Granted, it's a stretch, especially on a Fender scale, but hey, playing the blues is not for softies!

FIG. 5



In **FIG. 5**, the chords strummed on the downbeat in measure 1 provide big, fat accompaniment when playing blues rhythm guitar. The hip change from A to Am in measure 1 is distinctive and can add dramatic harmony to standards, like "Trouble in Mind" and "Sitting on Top of the World." **Performance Tip:** If the A major is played, low to high, with the middle, ring and pinky fingers, it will be a snap to transition to the Am by lifting the pinky on string 2 and playing the C note at fret 1 with the index.

FIG. 6

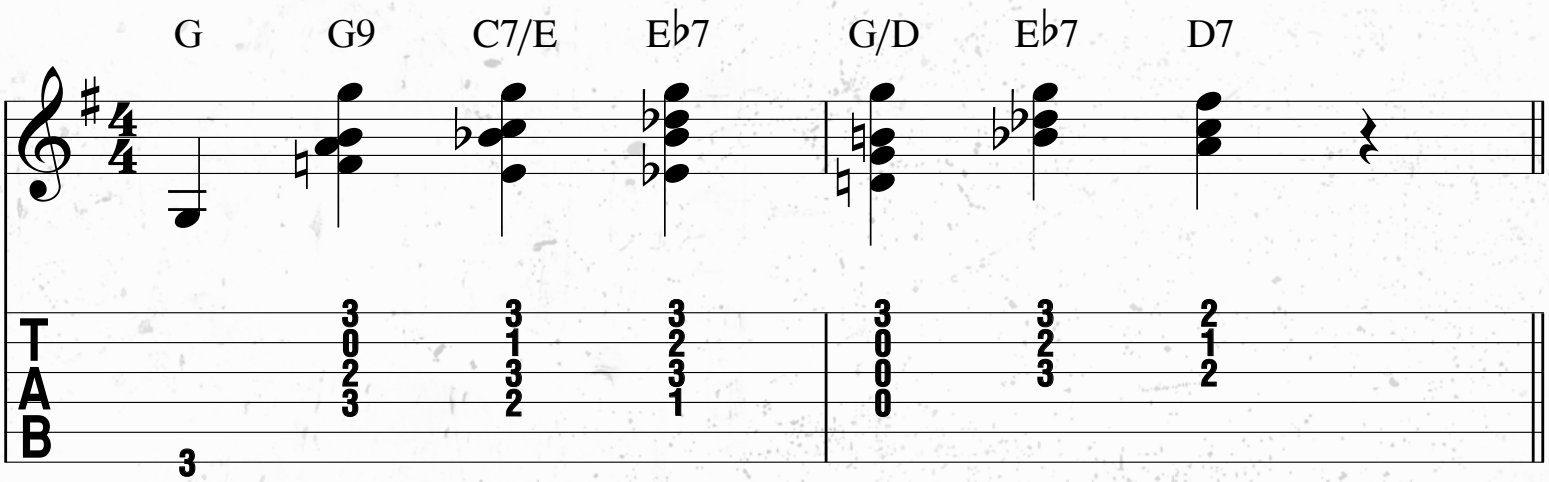


FIG. 6 also contains strummed chords, but of a more sophisticated variety, with common tones and leading tones. Stevie Ray Vaughan used something similar in "Rude Mood." Besides the jazzy 9th voicings, a hip bVI7 (Eb7) substitution leads smoothly to the second inversion (5th on the bottom) G triad in measure 2.

FIG. 7

Postwar Chicago blues legend and pioneer, Muddy Waters, and the other guitarists in his various bands, like Steady Rollin' Bob Margolin, were fond of single-note bass string turnarounds seen in **FIG. 7**. Check out how a second guitar could strum E7, A7, E7, and B7 chords of two beats each as accompaniment, though just the I and V changes as indicated could also suffice.

FIG. 8

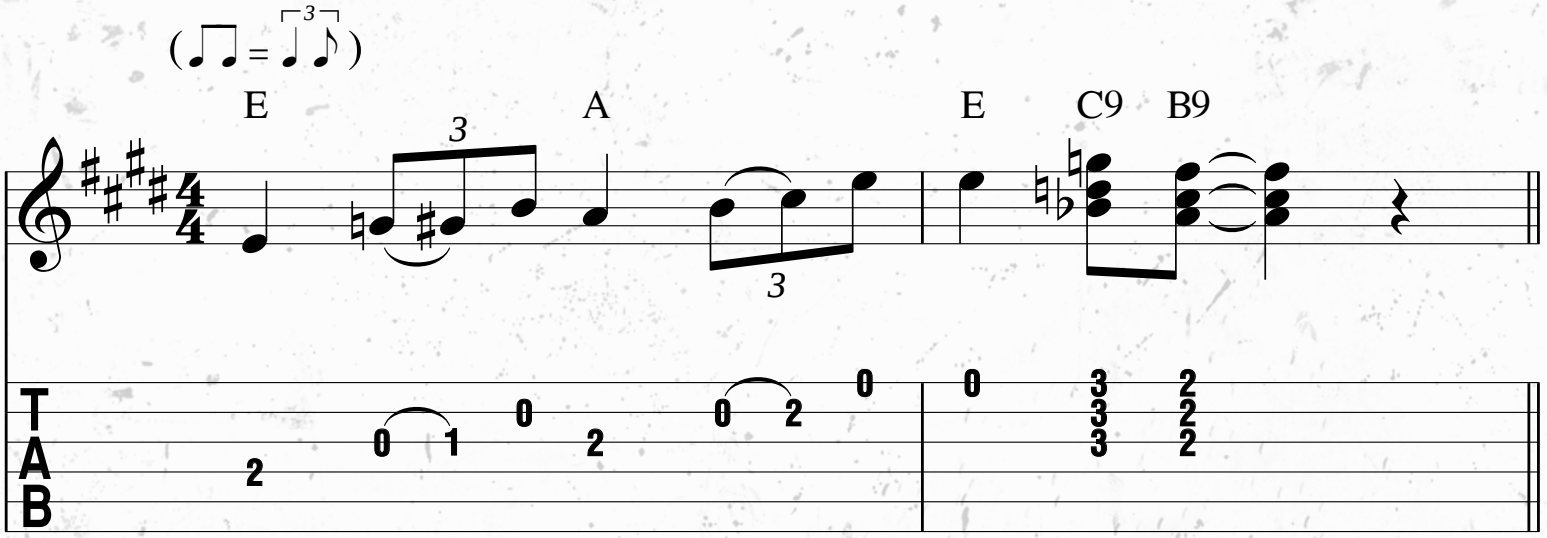


FIG. 8 could be considered a "lead guitar" turnaround played over a rhythm guitar accompaniment or just a bass, due to its upper register range and bluesy "lick appeal." Both Freddie King and Jimi Hendrix played similar patterns on electric guitar.

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Jason Becker by Ross Pelton

It’s a given, every guitar player has a first song they learned. It’s possible that you and your favorite player may share the same point of origin. So from time to time we will ask players to share the first song they learned on guitar. Anybody else out there start with the E, A and B7 of “Sloop John B”? If not, maybe you share a first song with one of these players.

THE FIRST SONG I LEARNED

JASON BECKER

I didn't get an electric guitar until I was in the 7th grade. The first song I learned was "Buckets of Rain" by Bob Dylan and "A Soulin'" by Peter, Paul and Mary. It's kind of classical, but very basic. There's a high part and a low part. He showed me each part and I put them together.

11

Jason Becker by Ross Pelton

"A Soulin" by Peter, Paul and Mary

2 BUDDY GUY

The first song I learned was "Boogie Chillen'" (John Lee Hooker) and then some Lightnin' Slim and even Lightnin' Hopkins. I don't think those are chords they are playing. You had the sound. And playing by yourself, you had to try to play rhythm with your thumb and lead with your other finger. The thumb had to keep the rhythm going when you was playing at the Saturday night fish fry. So you were the whole band, the bass player, the lead player, the singer, the drummer and everything else.

Buddy Guy 2010 by Scott Legato - Atlas Icons

"Boogie Chillen" by John Lee Hooker

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ZAKK WYLDE

I think it's everybody's, "Smoke on the Water" on the (low) E string. You just play it with your index finger. The other one was "Iron Man." Then there was the Queen song, "Another One Bites the Dust," which you could also play on one string. The first song I learned how to play all the way through was "Tangerine", by Led Zeppelin. That's what my guitar teacher taught me. ■

Zakk Wylde by Rick Gould

"Tangerine" by Led Zeppelin

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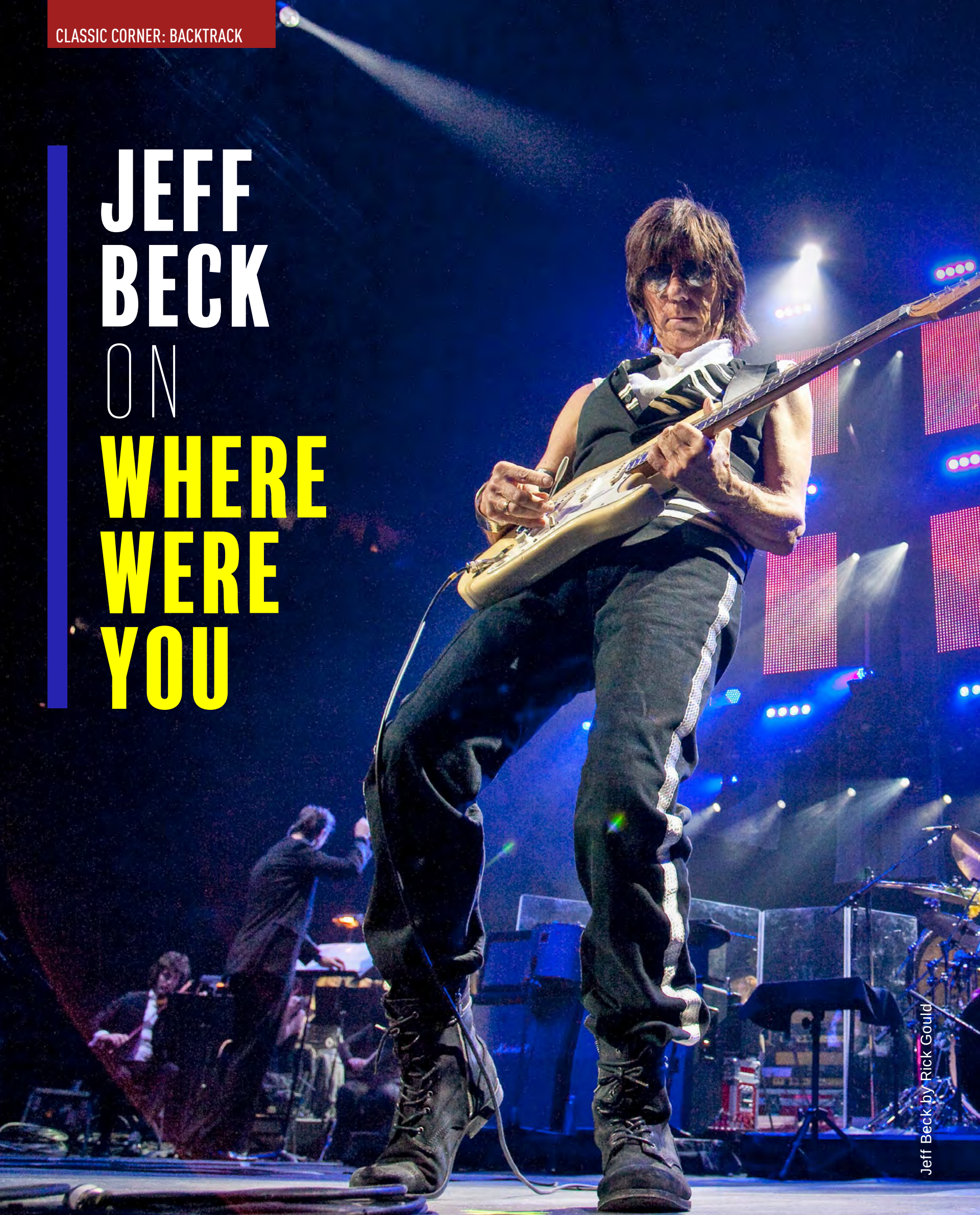
JEFF BECK ON WHERE WERE YOU



Jeff Beck by Rick Gould

"THE WHOLE SONG IS PLAYED ON FALSE HARMONICS EXCEPT FOR THE MAIN MELODY."

Let's talk about "Where Were You" (originally titled "Chipping Norton") from *Guitar Shop*. I both loved and hated that you didn't give me the ending.

Give me five because there was no way we were going to put an ending on it. We wanted to leave people with a lump in the back of the throat that didn't go away. We also couldn't come up with anything. Tony (Hymas) is such a dry bastard. He said we are not having an ending. That is the ending. He threatened me with violence if I finished it off.

Did you intentionally want to sound like a voice?

Yeah I did. I got that germ from this folk record. I heard this strange
Folk music with incredible voices on it. They had a way of breaking the voice and cascading notes without a break. I thought, I can do that on guitar. I heard it about four times and that was enough. I started picking out a few lines and I didn't want to hear anymore. I took just the first impression of this song. Terry was saying, ''I'm getting misty eyed listening to that.'' I went, "Good, you're supposed to." Then I dove down into the soul of my boots and tried to come up with some lines that continued from that. I just played these little sections for about three hours. We'd press the record button and go listen. Then we took all the meaty bits and welded them together. Tony came up with these devastating, wonderful chords behind it.

What about making it sound like a voice?

The whole song is played on false harmonics except for the main melody. The place where I played the harmonic, when you bend the arm you get this voice sound. I used a 59' Strat with a long repeat echo. There's no synthesized tricks on it. I wanted a dramatic atmospheric thing with no rumbling bass, no drums to get in the way, just this soaring singing around the auditorium. I didn't want people to say, "Fucking hell listen to that." I wanted that of course, but I wanted them to listen to the melody. We were trying to get two minutes of the most glorious guitar playing we could get, which was in me all the way, just saying something, as long as it reaches somebody somewhere. It's ethereal and cloudlike. That's me inside. Ralph, my manager, said, ''Tony sounds great on that.'' We had a mix of it where the guitar was so over the top it sounded like a compressed synthesizer. I was so destroyed because he thought it was a keyboard. It's one continuous

line, so he thought it was a pitch wheel. “Where Were You” is the big brother to ‘’Final Peace.’’ I really didn’t know what was going on with ‘’Final Peace.’’ I didn’t have a clue what Tony’s chords were. I tried to put myself in a frame of mind like a vocalist who wouldn’t know about chords. A lot of vocalists don’t know what flat 13, or raised 5th means. I just know what chords make me go sideways and Tony has all those. He has these incredible voicings where it tricks your ear into thinking of melody. That was just a blind shot in the dark. We did three or four takes of nobody knowing what was going on. Tony was seeping with these beautiful chords, and I would find the register and play along with it, and goof off on it.

So many electric guitarists say their voice is best heard through a ballad. It’s their most personal voice.

I think so, because there’s no interference from heavyweight drums or tank-like bass which dissipates that tenderness there. Some of the most pointed stuff is where the band drops out and the vocalist does their stuff. Listen to when Tina is singing a ballad. It’s usually from girls.

Do you look at a song and know this needs the Tele or Strat?

I only play a Strat really. I play a Tele once in a blue moon. The Strat is my right arm, unless there is a horrible squeaking or horrible hum. I also try and get the meat and potatoes on the first take. “Cause We’ve Ended as Lovers” was a Tele with humbuckers. It was the perfect guitar for that. It made me play more because it has no vibrato arm. You can’t bullshit that. The Tele is a good old solid workhorse. People have scalloped fretboards and gizmos and handle grips and velcro fasteners. There is nothing finer than a Tele or a Strat for rock guitar playing. Really you’re just faced with something you know in a simple guitar. It’s just meat and potatoes. ■

“Where Were You” by Jeff Beck

Jeff Beck by Ken Settle

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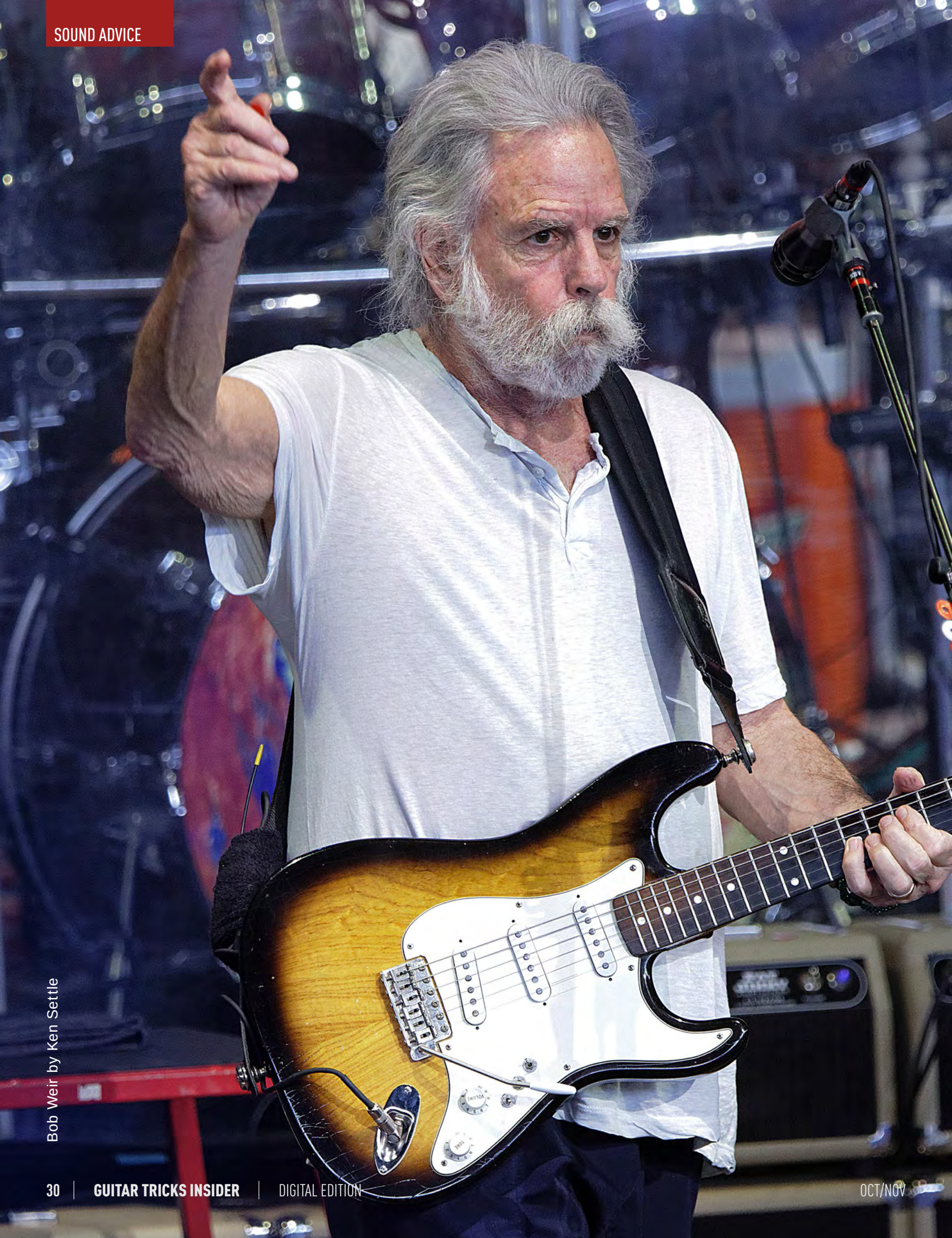


Bob Weir by Ken Settle

Sound Advice

Bob Weir

By John Stix

Since the mid-sixties the Grateful Dead's, Bob Weir, has been absorbing and redefining the subtle complexities that link the past to the future of rhythm guitar playing. His most recent insights are shared in the live performances of Dead and Company. Weir started by copying the guitar figures of Joan Baez and progressed onto the country blues of Reverend Gary Davis, who for a short time, was his only "real" teacher. Today his ideas for rhythm guitar playing may come from listening to McCoy Tyner and string quartets. Tapping those years of experience on stage and in the studio, Bob Weiroffers the following insights into developing your skills as a rock rhythm guitar player.

1 Playing With the Band.

Gary Davis taught me how one guitar player could be a whole band. I've never directly applied this on stage. It's too complicated for a whole band to fall behind, especially a band with six members. When you play with another guitarist or keyboard player, you're either going to dance around or walk all over each other. It's one or the other. So you have to play with other people that you like and who will listen to you. And of course you have to listen to them. Play jams together, tape them, and find out who is good at what. If you're playing in a band you have to get over the soloist ego hang up. You've got to listen to the whole

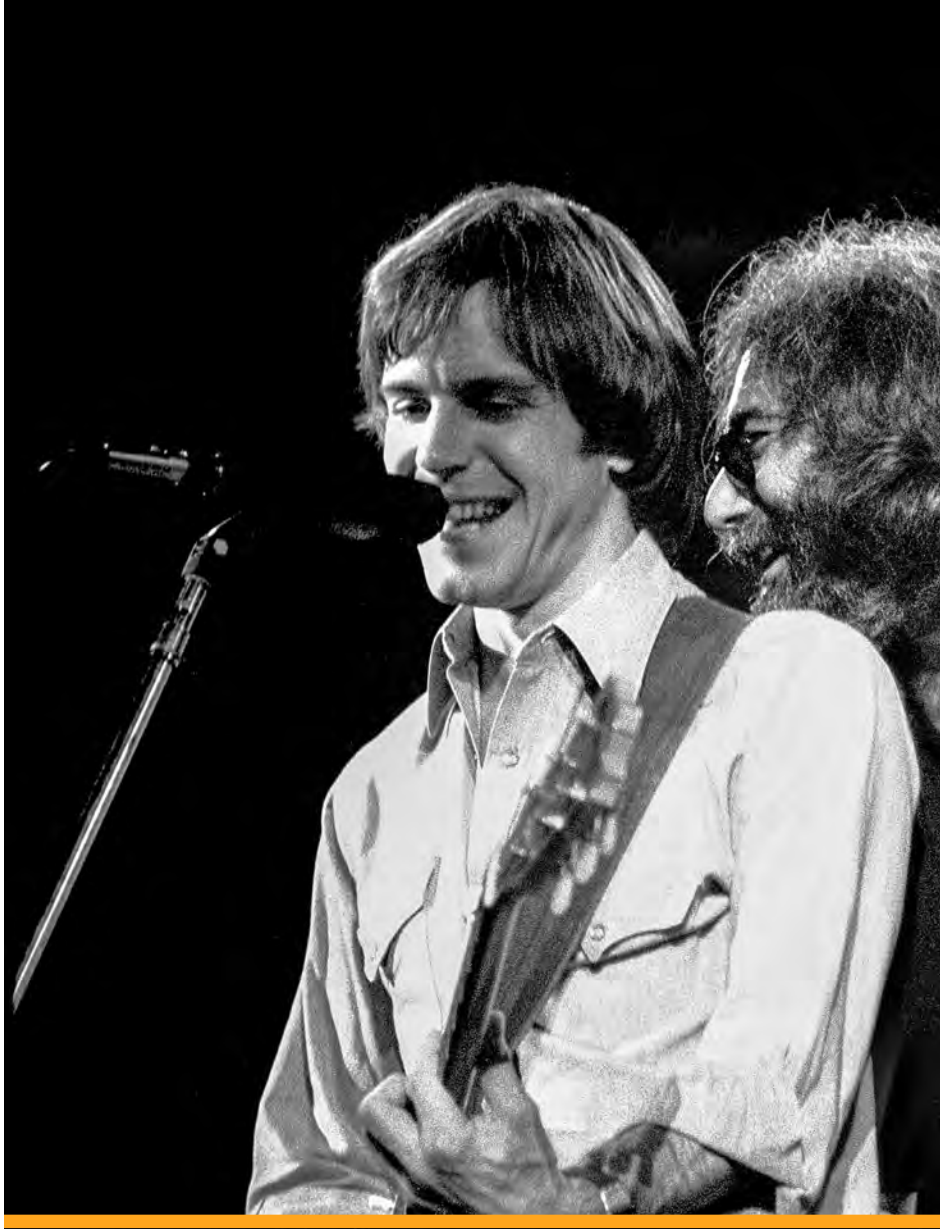
sound. When you're first starting to learn, it's especially difficult to not concentrate on what you, yourself, are doing. It's hard to step away from that and hear what the whole thing sounds like. The tape will do that for you. Go back and listen to see how everything fits together. You've got to listen for what a song needs. Even if you've got three guitarists in the band (remember Moby Grape?) at one point two of them have got to be comping behind the third one. They are going to have to work as one instrument. If you think of yourself as two lead guitars working together, then suddenly you have a whole new different approach to rhythm guitar. You might play two or three notes and start thinking in terms of counterpoint. If you're thinking of three notes, you can start throwing in leading tones.

2 On Developing a Part.

When you get close to a song it will tell you what kind of texture to play. One thing that I like to do is try and be a horn or string section. For instance, in "Sugar Magnolia", I'm a cross between a brass section and a guitar. I'm playing lots of triads, a contrapuntal a line, here and there, and then another triad. There are two separate registers that I play off of. The alto register is the brass section and the baritone register is the guitar. It goes back and forth, and I try and get a swing thing happening between the two. In this particular case, the song developed because I was playing brass licks that I heard on a Delaney and Bonnie record. I was going for brass licks and whatever time I had in between, was filled with guitar. Then I thinned the whole situation down so it wouldn't be such a big mess that nobody could play over it. Once again, when you're playing in a six-piece band you've to be sparse and succinct to get through.

3 On strumming.

I use my whole hand to play the strings. I do brush strokes with the back of my nails



"The song "Sugar Magnolia" developed because I was playing brass licks that I heard on a Delaney and Bonnie record. I was going for brass licks and whatever time I had in between was filled with guitar."

Grateful Dead by Paul Natkin

and I pluck with the front. About 70% of the time, I'm playing each note individually, either arpeggiating or plucking a chord all at once. Once you work up a touch for plucking a chord all at once, you have the ability to bring out a certain note within that chord. I use as many as four notes in a chord and I'll still be plucking it. I can bring out a certain note and create an ascending or descending line through a series of chords. I'm just playing the chords, but there's that one note which sticks out. Besides a line, you can build the motion of the song just around that one idea. Again, if you listen to a tape of your band playing, you can find out if there's anyone else playing any of the notes in your inversion. If I'm playing an A chord and somebody else is playing my root, perhaps I'll base my inversion on the third or fifth of the chord. I might just leave out the note A, which is the simplest thing to do. And often times the simplest thing is the best. ■

"Sugar Magnolia" by Grateful Dead

JOE BONAMASSA

By **Mike Mettler**

"I know people who are very famous who cannot even fathom cutting a solo before they've got it worked out, to the point of almost being charted out. And then it's like you're an actor, where you've got to hit your mark. I've been brought up to improvise. That is my skill set."

If there's one hard-and-fast rule blues-rock guitar prodigy Joe Bonamassa follows, it's the more you play, the more you know. "I've learned a lot in the last decade musically, and I've also learned a lot about myself," Bonamassa admits. "The first step is to play on your strengths and accept your weaknesses. One of my main strengths is I have this ability to adapt to any situation musically because I listened to so much music over the years. I'm a fan of guitar playing. I'm a fan of everything from the Beano album [a.k.a. *John Mayall and The Blues Breakers With Eric Clapton*, released in 1966] to *Friday Night in San Francisco* [by Al Di Meola, John McLaughlin, and Paco de Lucia, released in 1981]. You draw on those influences, and you draw on the people who have paved the way for you."

Bonamassa has spent years forging a singular identity as a chops-driven guitarist who respects his predecessors, collects and plays vintage gear, calls his own shots, and sells out performance halls across the globe. He's comfortable enough in his own skin to balance guitar-hero histrionics (his 2000 cover of Jethro Tull's, "A New Day Yesterday," 2012's guns-a-blazing "I Got All You Need") with strings and horn-section spice (the tasteful interplay on "Trouble Town" and "Hidden Charms," both from 2015's *Live at Radio City Music Hall*) — not to mention his ferocious fretboard testifying alongside Reese Wynans' heavenly church organ lines on "So, What Would I Do," the closing track to his majestic 2014 studio album, *Different Shades of Blue*.

While he understands how to capitalize on his aforementioned strengths, Bonamassa is also very clear about what his primary weaknesses are — and how to overcome them. "I have this tendency to overplay, and I have to constantly try to squelch the urge to say too much," he observes.

Joe Bonamassa by Christie Goodwin

"You also have to realize that in a place like Carnegie Hall or any theater situation, all the subtleties go out the window in a bigger room. You have to paint more in broad strokes, rather than play a million notes. Sometimes the audience only hears every other note. The human body can only digest so much at one time."

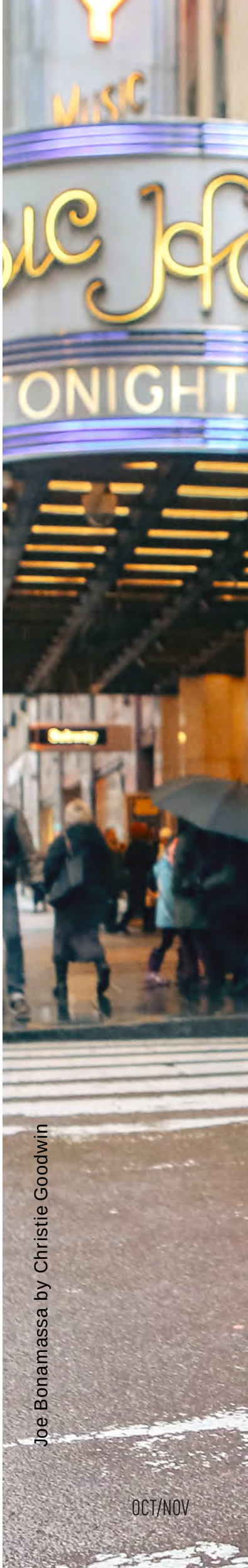
To remain on a path of continued artistic growth, Bonamassa feels guitar playing, singing, and songwriting must all go hand in hand. "All three are not necessarily mutually exclusive," he points out. "All of those elements come together when you write a song. I know the playbook. I could easily write myself an easy record to sing — not pushing it too hard, knowing I have to go out and tour this thing a couple hundred times. But that DNA is not in me. It's more about the hard work, and the fight. I've been programmed because the music business is so tough, and it was very tough to get to where we're at. I always carry these chips on my shoulder, where I feel I have to fight the whole damn world. I realize more and more that I don't. But intrinsically, when I pick up the guitar — especially electric guitar — I can't turn that off. It's been 27 years of hard work, and the chips on my shoulder are still there because I had to claw and scratch to build something, hopefully unique, that people like."

While Bonamassa's electric guitar prowess is widely praised, the man is also a pretty fierce acoustic player — but don't tell him that. "I learned from my acoustic tours that I'm an electric guitar player. That's what I do for a living," Bonamassa clarifies. "Acoustic guitars are tools for me. I don't sit at home with acoustic guitars — I break them out when I need them."

That said, Bonamassa learned some seriously valuable lessons during his series of unplugged dates. "What the acoustic gigs boil down to is they're about the songs and the vocals," he reveals. "Once you get your head around that, everything becomes a little simpler. I've seen other artists who are predominantly electric players do acoustic things, and they still feel the need to maintain that certain level of shred — and it doesn't work. Musically, it just doesn't work. You have to service the song and service the gig the proper way. You can only do so much on the acoustic guitar."

This level of artistic self-awareness carries over into how Bonamassa approaches nailing the "right" solo in the studio. "I try very hard, and, 95 percent of the time, I do get the solo as the takes go down," he details. "What I do is, I develop these little themes. Usually, my first two takes of a solo are my best work. That's before I start thinking about it — committing to an approach and a solo map, where it starts here and ends up there — before it becomes more clinical."

Being too clinical can ultimately hamper the following of one's instincts, the latter of which, tends to lead to much more rewarding results. "There's a song called 'No Good Place for the Lonely' [on his 2016 studio release, *Blues of Desperation*] where we have a big jam at the end," Bonamassa explains. "The third take is the one where we kind of stretched out. And that was it. I didn't overdub anything. I just played this solo that, in 10,000 years of trying to figure out what I did, I'd never



Joe Bonamassa by Christie Goodwin

DIO CIT
JOE BONAMASSA TONIGHT

get back to that headspace. It was just I was feeling the sound, and everything was working."

Trying to describe and recapture that solo mojo, however, is always a bit tricky. "The mix in the headphones was rockin' and the band was kickass, and everybody goes, 'Man, that solo — how long did it take you to do that?'" Bonamassa recounts. "Even Kevin [Shirley, Joe's longtime producer] goes, 'Good solo.' Was it? I wasn't even paying attention. I just was reacting, and playing music. Then I listened back and went, 'Where the hell did that come from?' I do it live, and I try to get a few of those things. It never seems to have the same magic, but it's also one of those things where you go, 'Do I really care?' It's just a snapshot in time that you'll never get back."

The key is to capture those in-the-zone moments, where the notes being played instinctually become second nature. "I know people who are very famous, very credited,

Joe Bonamassa by Rick Gould

"Tiger In Your Tank from Muddy Wolf at Red Rocks" by Joe Bonamassa

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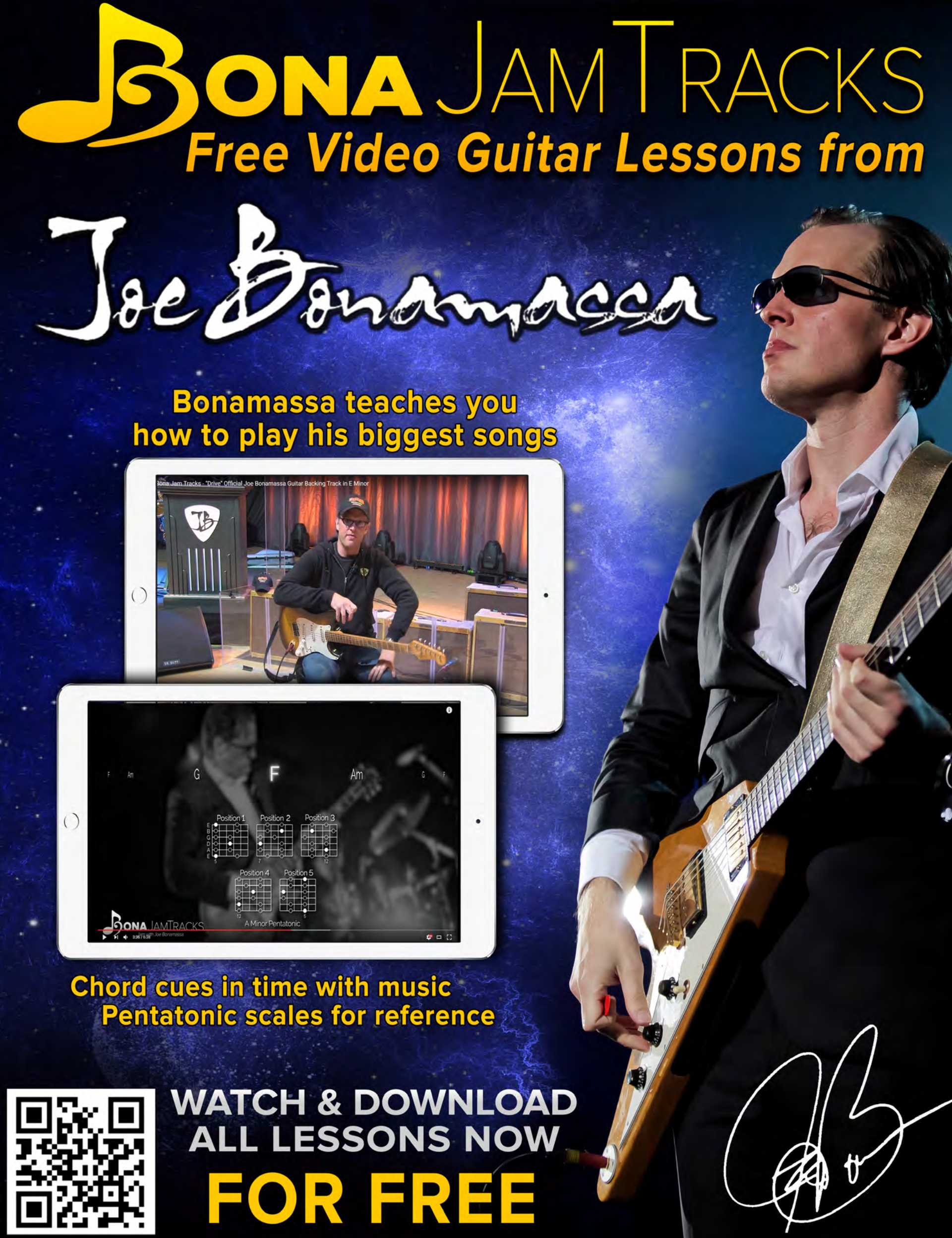

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and very good who cannot even fathom cutting a solo before they've got it worked out to the point of almost being charted out," Bonamassa says. "And then it's like you're an actor, where you've got to hit your mark. That is one approach. Generally, those type of players and musicians are what I call real musicians. They actually know what those black dots do on the page, but I don't read music. I've been brought up to improvise. That is my skill set."

Said skill set is what makes Bonamassa such a fine off-the-cuff player. "Blues is improvisation," he notes. "Blues is feel and off the top of your head, reacting to other players and developing your listening skills. The concept of just digging your heels into the dirt and putting your head down, going, 'It doesn't matter what happens around me; I've got to hit these marks at so-and-so bar' — that is definitely a foreign concept in my world."

Bonamassa consistently makes sure his heroes get their due whenever he plays across the pond in Europe. "Stevie Ray Vaughan paved the way for a lot of blues guitar players, as did Gary Moore and B.B. King," he says. "So whenever I'm in Europe, I always try to give credit to a gentleman, who is a wonderful artist and a friend — Walter Trout. Walter, particularly in Europe along with the late Gary Moore and the late Luther Allison, really charged ahead in the early 90's, and they were playing blistering blues rock to a very welcoming European audience. Walter is a much bigger name in Europe than he is in his home country, unfortunately. But if it wasn't for those cats in Europe paving the way, I wouldn't exist. I came over and I was this American kid playing British blues covers, and it somehow resonated with that audience. We've been able to take it to where we've taken it over there as well. It really does say a lot, because it's important to understand the history. It's not a fluke. It's not immaculate conception."

"Cadillac Assembly Line from Live at the Greek Theatre" by Joe Bonamassa

Joe Bonamassa by Christie Goodwin

To that end, Bonamassa has dug even deeper to respect his roots by honoring some of his strongest influences on his recent spate of tribute tours, the latest of which can be seen and heard on his current release, *Live at the Greek Theatre*, recorded on August 29, 2015, at the fabled Los Angeles outdoor venue in Griffith Park. Next up is a live run in tribute to the three British Kings — i.e., Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, and Jimmy Page. "It's a huge task what we're doing, and it's a huge responsibility to service the music properly," believes Bonamassa. "We've been doing these tributes the last 3 years, because they're fun. Last year, we did the Three Kings — Freddie, B.B., and Albert. It was the same vibe as the year before that when we did Howlin' Wolf and Muddy Waters [captured on August 31, 2014, for the brilliant *Muddy Wolf at Red Rocks*]. I think that gig at Red Rocks was my best gig ever, to this day. We walked out there and had a quiet confidence. It was joyous from the downbeat. I was feeling good. The band was just on fire. You're in front of 10,000 people and you go, 'How does life suck at all at this moment?'"

Though Bonamassa confirms this year's British Kings live dates will be "the last in that series, for a while" in terms of tribute shows, he realizes what's at stake for the bigger picture. "It is fun, and every time I've done one of those, I come out a better musician," he admits. "Immersing myself in someone else's catalog only helps the newer stuff I'm doing."

Bonamassa takes none of his achievements for granted. "Sometimes I wake up and I really am very thankful and grateful," he concludes. "The fans have put me where I'm at, 100 percent. You know, I think the diversity of the catalog has helped the diversity of the audience. It's not just one thing." Diversity in material and an unwavering willingness to grow and continually challenge his skill set — that's how Joe Bonamassa goes riding with the Kings to appeal to a whole new generation of eager listeners. ■

Mike Mettler writes the weekly Audiophile column for the Digital Trends website and is also the music editor of Sound & Vision. He interviews artists and producer about their love of music and its creation on his own site, The SoundBard

www.soundbard.com

Joe Bonamassa's Great Moment in the Studio with the Nocaster

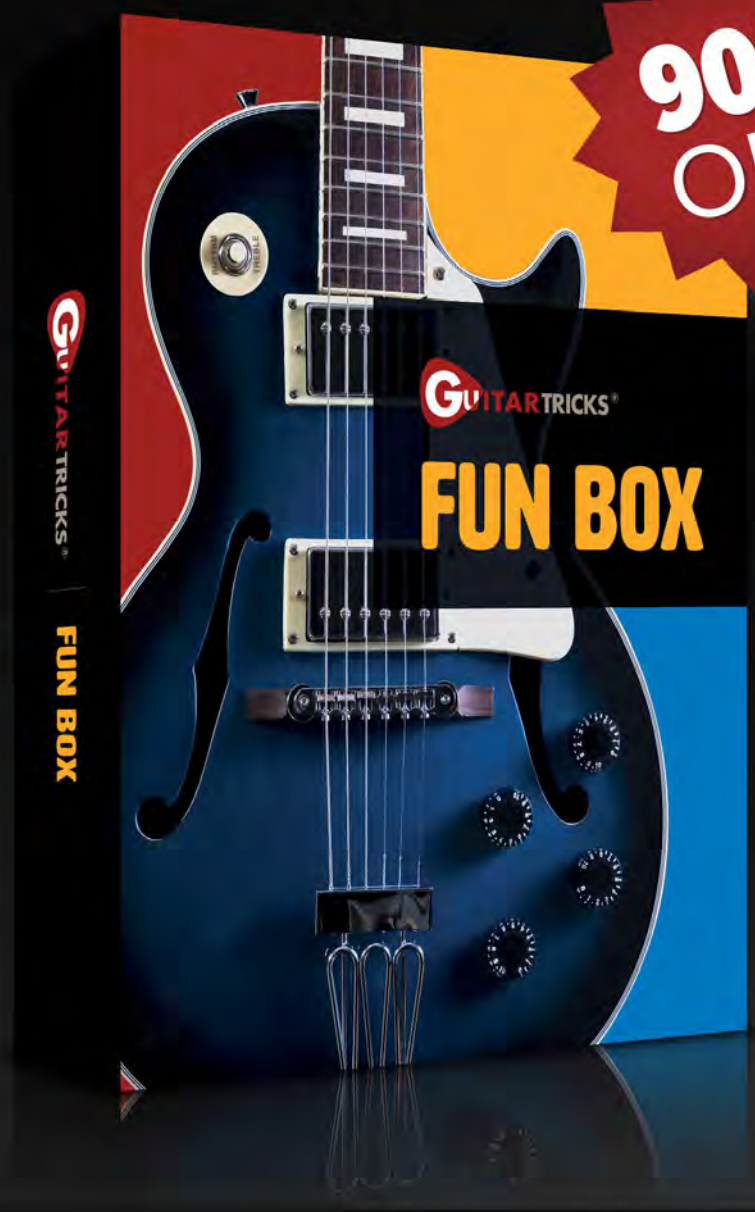
If you met me, and I didn't know who you were, and you wanted to play one track off of this record to say this is me, this is my voice ---

The one that sums me up the best is "No Good Place for the Lonely". I think that playbook, British Blues rock, with a guitar freak out at the end, I think that's intrinsically my stamp. For me, mostly it's the best really when you boil it down. That's my stamp.

What guitar did you use?

Oddly enough, I used the Tweed Twin, the Bassman, and a '51 Nocaster that somebody conveniently, and inconveniently, put a PAF in the front position, which is killer. And it's out of phase in the middle, so its got that quacky Peter Green thing, and then the back pickup is a flat pole and it roars.

Joe Bonamassa by Christie Goodwin



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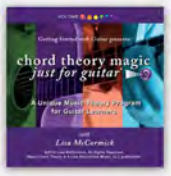

And then front pickup is like a Gibson, a PAF. It's a Gibson pickup with an Ash body, and it's like totally killer.

A Nocaster is a no name Telecaster?

It's a '51 yeah. It's when Fender didn't have a name for what would then become the Telecaster. The Broadcaster had to be ceased and desisted because the Gretsch company had a drum kit named the Broadcaster. Gretsch and Leo (Fender) had a friendly relationship so they quit using Broadcaster. In '51 it's called a Nocaster, which Leo made the employees clip the word, Broadcaster, off the Fender logo, and they just stuck a Fender logo on there. Then in Oct of '51 is where you see the first Telecasters, because of the invention of television. The Broadcaster became a Telecaster. That is a true historical fact. ■

Joe Bonamassa by Rick Gould

"No Good Place for the Lonely" by Joe Bonamassa (solo starts at 4:55)

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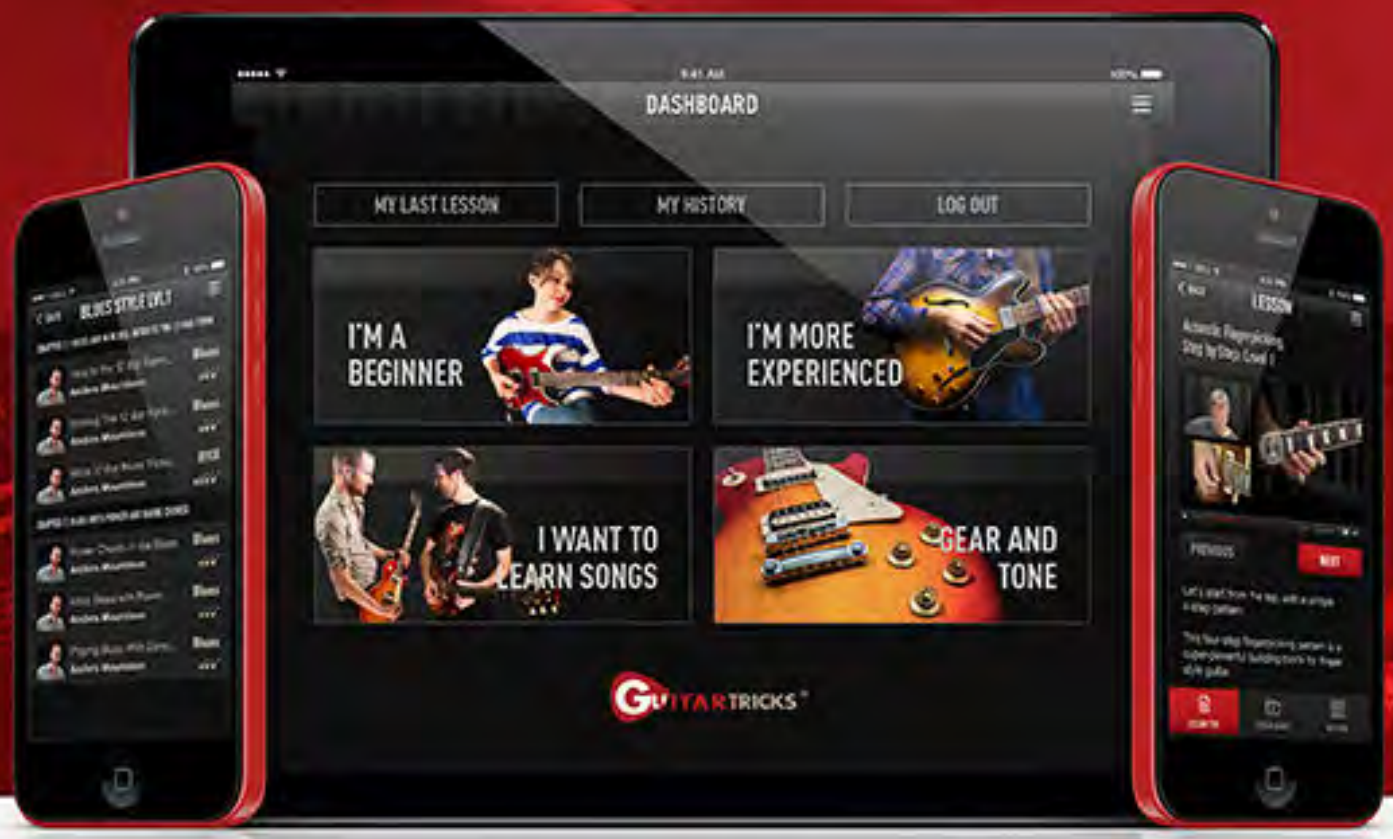

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STING

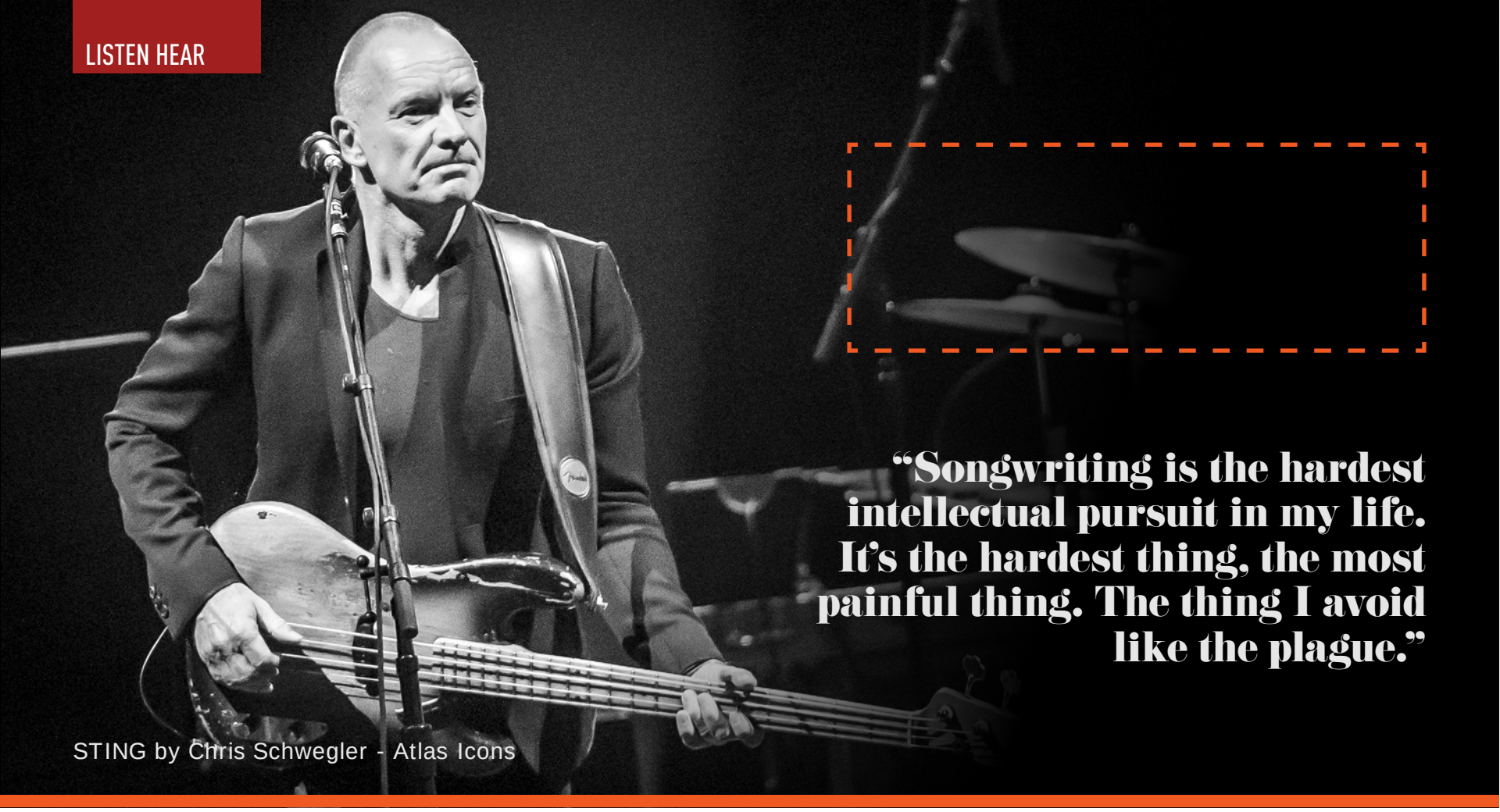
By John Stix

Sting by Ken Settle

Sting sees the world through kaleidoscope eyes and the world loves what he sees. His musical vision reflects a fusion of experiences, including singing with jazz legends (Gil Evans) and rock heroes (Rod Stewart and Eric Clapton). He's written a Broadway show, *The Last Ship*, and has sung with Opera's finest (Pavarotti). As a gifted writer of vocal melodies, Sting finds a way to bring the politically charged message of "They Dance Alone" to the same audience that lives on love songs and Grammy winners, like "If I Ever Lose My Faith in You."

His musical imagination has no boundaries, few rules, and always great bands to make it come alive. Echoes of centuries old Spanish classical guitar traditions mingle easily with the influences of Weather Report or Fats Domino. In this conversation, Sting examines the songwriting process that brought him to his latest recording, *57th and 9th*.

"Fragile" by Sting and Stevie Wonder



STING by Chris Schwegler - Atlas Icons

“Songwriting is the hardest intellectual pursuit in my life. It’s the hardest thing, the most painful thing. The thing I avoid like the plague.”

I was talking with Les Paul and talking invention. I said, “Do you see these things complete in your head, or do you thinker until you get it?” Les says, “Oh no, I just wake up and go. That’s it. Mary we’re taking the car and going to Ampex and we’re gonna make this thing.” Is that how it happens with songs for you?

That’s not the way it works for me. I wish I could just walk in the garden and a song would occur to me. Sometimes a fragment of a song can just come to me while making breakfast. Just a fragment. But really the business of songwriting is building from these fragments. And that just takes getting down to work at 9:00 in the morning and tinkering. Using that fragment with that fragment, and trying to join them together, either lyrically or harmonically or chromatically, trying to add things up to make something of substance. It’s not. I never see the whole thing. I wish. That takes genius. But no, I have to work hard. Songwriting is the hardest intellectual pursuit in my life. It’s the hardest thing, the most painful thing. The thing I avoid like the plague. I’d rather be on tour. I’d rather be a sportsman. I’d rather be a gardener. And yet the whole structure of my life is based on this very ephemeral thing. I think of a melody and I think of a piece of doggerel and I add both things together. That’s what my whole life is based on. And also everyone around me’s life is based on my thinking of this stuff. So in a way it’s a constant source of anxiety. Yet a constant source of the greatest pleasure.

What is the pebble in your shoe that gets this oyster goin’? If you could you would avoid it.

If I could I would avoid it. A sense of responsibility. A sense that if I actually do put my nose to the grindstone after a certain amount of time there will be a jewel.

You will take time. You say I’m gonna turn it on like a light switch or try to? It’s 9:00 I will sit down at whatever instrument. I’ll work till 12 and maybe there will be one fragment that I’ll keep after all that. That’s like a writer.

I give myself a deadline. I phone my musicians. I say on April 12 you are going to come to my house and we’ll have ten songs to work on. It’s now February. I have to do that amount of work in that time. I’d rather be on holiday.

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I will say I will now produce. Then you really have to get into some serious therapy because I'm not really the one either to want to make music, just for the sake of making music. I really have to have something to say. Since my last record I need to have learned something, either about music, about myself, about the world, in order to feel justified in saying anything. There is too much music, there is too much on the airwaves. There are too many frequencies already filled up. Why should I add to it? I hope I am honest enough to be able to say well if I've nothing left to say that is coherent or useful, then I should say nothing. But I have to trust myself, that if I put myself through it, there will be something there.

Was it always this hard to write music?

No, I think when you are younger you are more confident. I think only certainty is really a terror of the ignorant. When you are young you are ignorant about it. I was talking to James Taylor about songwriting the other day. I said it's funny that you and I and our contemporaries write music very simply. We are not intimidated. We weren't when we were young. Classical musicians on the other hand, from the age of four, are dominated by these huge figures of Mozart, Bach, and Hayden. And to even conceive of writing a piece of music with those people over you, is inconceivable. So most classical musicians don't write music. But we who listen to Fats Domino, we can work those chords out. Yeah I can write a song. We started that way and I'm glad we started that way. So it's strange. ■

"Driven to Tears" by Pearl Jam with Sting

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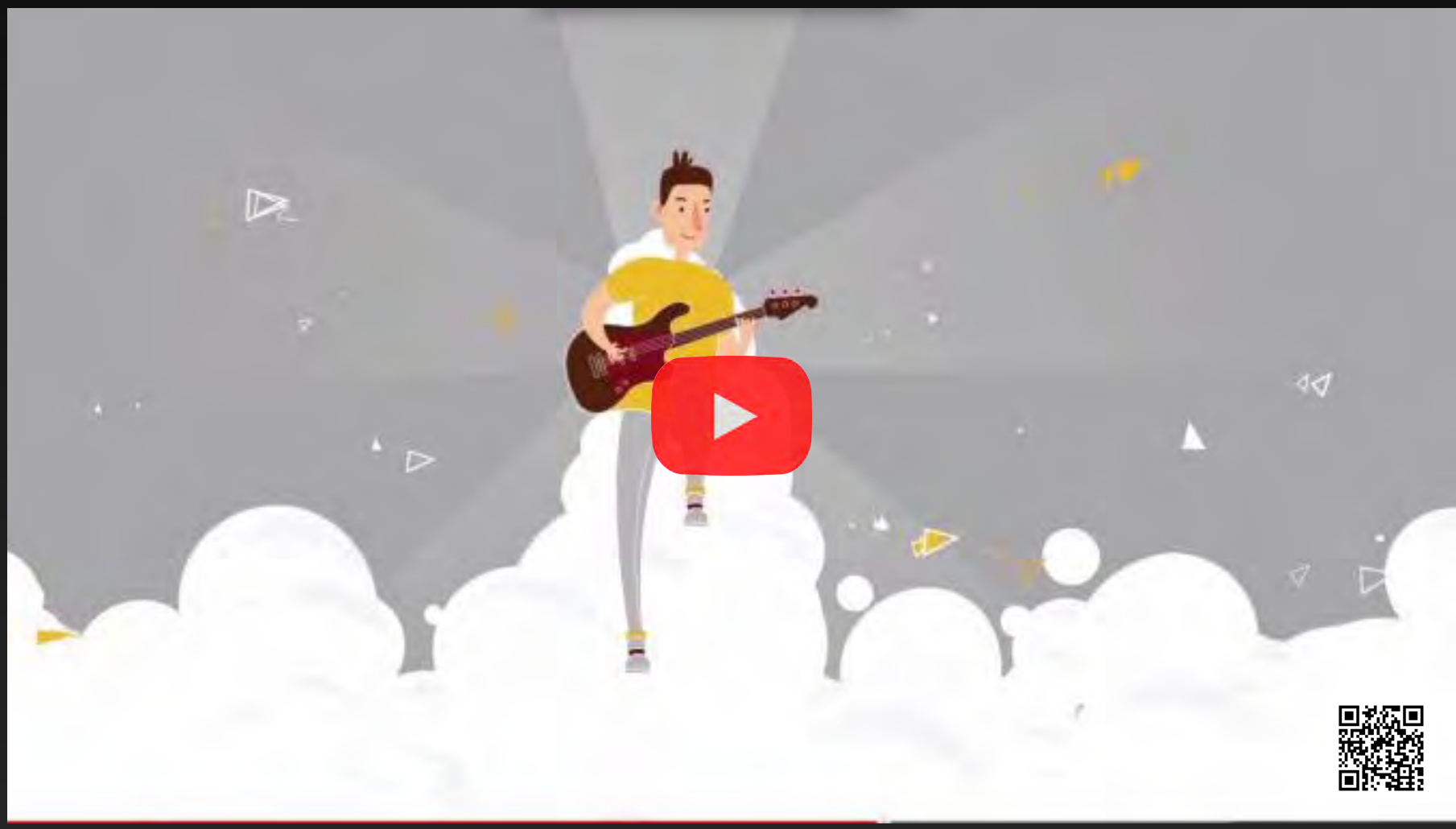


BOB SEGER'S 10 YEAR OVERNIGHT SUCCESS

by **Bruce Pollock**

"In the eight dates that Seger and his band played in January of 1977, he and the band made as much money as they did in all of 1975—which was 261 nights on the road."

Having spent so many years toiling in heavy metal anonymity, a lunch pail rocker, known mainly in the Midwest, hardly had a second to sit back and enjoy the big break that finally came for Bob Seger, with the massive 1977 hit single, "Night Moves". Compounding the natural anxiety of a local fish out of water, he thought for sure he'd be accused of stealing the title from the 1975 movie with that name, starring Gene Hackman and directed by Arthur Penn. "I did not steal the title from the movie," Seger proclaimed from his snowbound hideaway, a ranch house on two acres off a desolate dirt road in Howley, Michigan, an hour north of Detroit. "I wrote that song more than a year and a half before the movie, and I can prove it. My road man heard it at the time. I felt a little shaky when the movie came out, but I stuck with the title because I liked it."

As Seger may or may not have realized at the time, you can't copyright a title. So even if he had taken it from the movie, no one was about to come out of the woodwork to claim a piece of the royalties from his subsequent million selling single and album. But such is the paranoia of the working man in the headlights of fame after a decade chasing it. In the eight dates that Seger and his band played in January of 1977, he and the band made as much money as they did in all of 1975—which was 261 nights on the road.

Bob Seger 1977 by Ken Settle

How, I wondered, could this be explained? "I've got a theory," said Seger, who remembers dates of gigs, attendance figures, and sales of albums the way ballplayers reel off the names of all the pitchers they've ever hit home runs against, the pitch, the inning, the ballpark, the temperature and the humidity.

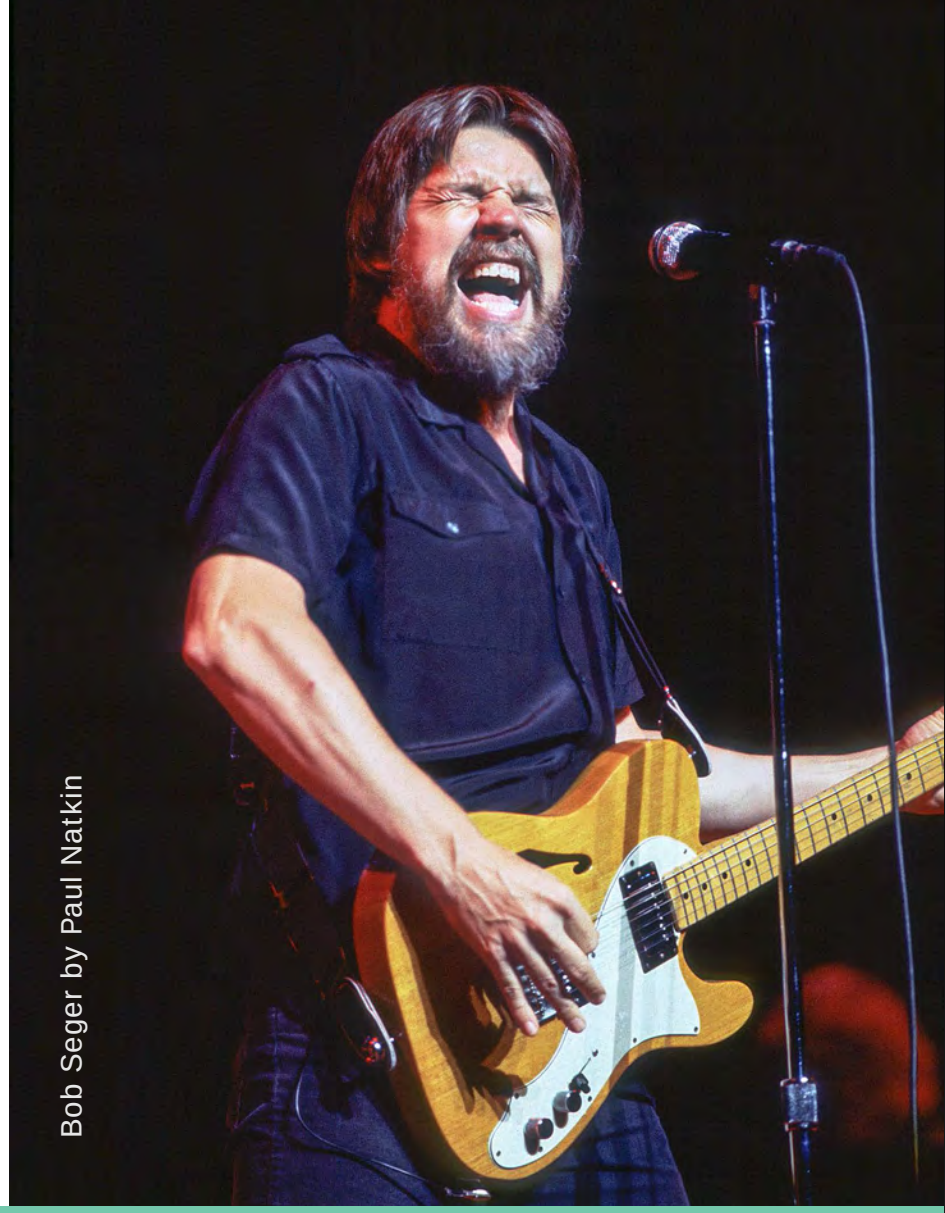
"Up until 1974, we never did big stages. Up until 1974 I didn't have the Silver Bullet band, either. From 1970 to 1974, I went through about six or seven bands and never had any staying power. I couldn't find musicians I could work with and relate to. I was working with musicians from Tulsa, Los Angeles, New York. Nobody ever wanted to live in the same town. Now everybody in my band is from Detroit, so when we rehearse we don't have to meet in someplace like Atlanta.

Also, it's the first time we had a good booking agency. We were with an agency out of Detroit which could never really put us anywhere. It wasn't their fault, though, because the records weren't anywhere either. Up until 1974, we'd go into a town and there wouldn't be any records in the stores. Even in Chicago, which is only 300 miles away or Columbus, Ohio, where we'd play maybe ten times a year, the records wouldn't be in the stores. But when we signed with Capitol the second time, all the older were gone and the younger guys had taken over and they wanted FM acts. They wanted to push us.

So it was the band, the agency and the label. It was the first time we ever toured nationally. In 1974 we did ninety dates with BTO, we played with Aerosmith, Black Oak Arkansas, you name it. The band formed in October, 1974, and in 1975 we did 261 dates, and ninety nine percent of them were one-nighters. Now that gets you seen by a lot of people. It gets your band tight. And in the end, when you release a live album, it explodes like ours did (Live Bullet, released in 1976)."

Following in the tradition of other Michigan legends such as Iggy Stooge, Alice Cooper, Mitch Ryder, Grand Funk Railroad, and Question Mark and the Mysterians, Bob Seger went the local band route from bar to bar, town to town, releasing six singles before one of them, "Rambling Gambling, Man," made the top twenty. "But five of those six were hits in Detroit," Bob said. And what price local glory?

"Well, after a local hit we could make about $500 at the Mt. Holly Ski Lodge." Then came the first big national hit and the changes it



Bob Seger by Paul Natkin

"Night Moves" by Bob Seger & the Silver Bullet Band

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Guitar collection – Tim @ Sounds Affects Music

“In 1975 we did 261 dates, and ninety nine percent of them were one-nighters. Now that gets you seen by a lot of people. It gets your band tight.”

brought. “Our organ player went on an ego trip and quit the group just before a national tour. So we went out as a three-piece which was a dire mistake. The tour only lasted about four weeks and was pretty much a disaster.”

Later, with a new organ player, Seger and crew built toward another peak. “Early in 1970, in Orlando, Florida, we played the biggest gig of our career. We drew 8,500 people and made $10,000 for one night, which was totally ridiculous for our band. About a month after that, when we got back to doing what we normally did, the usual, run of the mill, crummy gigs, the guys kind of got depressed and the group broke up.”

With ten years and six albums behind him and eight singles at that point, Bob Seger is perhaps more qualified than most to comment on the nuts and bolts of a quintessential rock-and-roll overnight success.

Go Bob. “The first four years were a fiasco. Nobody knew what they were doing. The next four years I made some good albums, but I had to go through six bands to do it. I had my ups and downs, but I always managed to make a living out of it, and really, that was enough for me, because I enjoyed doing it. I didn’t want to do a nine to five gig, and I knew sooner or later I’d figure out what I was doing wrong.” ■

Bob Seger and The Town Cryers 1964 by Ken Settle

5 CRUNCHY STOMPBOX TONES

by **Pete Prown**

MOST GUITARISTS GET INTO NASTY, DIRTY GUITAR TONES AT SOME POINT, BUT CAN GET CONFUSED ON THE VARIOUS TYPES OF GRITTY STOMPBOX TONES OUT THERE. WORDS LIKE *OVERDRIVE*, *FUZZBOX*, *DISTORTION*, AND *SATURATED GAIN* ARE BANDIED ABOUT WITH LITTLE EXPLANATION IN THE PEDAL WORLD. IN THAT LIGHT, LET'S UNPACK THESE TONE TYPES, AS WELL AS A FEW OF THE LEGENDARY PLAYERS WHO USE THEM.

1. FUZZ

A fuzzbox is perhaps the simplest form of dirt — it's that famous guitar "honk" behind so much 60's pop and psychedelia. Some examples of vintage fuzz can be heard on the Beatles', "Think for Yourself" (check out Paul McCartney's fuzz bass!), and Jimi Hendrix's, "Foxy Lady," the latter fueled by the legendary Fuzz Face pedal, one of the earliest fuzzboxes. By the end of the decade, fuzz had been heard on everything, from the Rolling Stones', "Satisfaction", to Jefferson Airplane's, "Somebody to Love."

SONG: One of the greatest moments in square-wave history came on the Yardbirds', "I'm a Man," where you can actually hear Jeff Beck kick on a fuzzbox for his blazing outro solo.

2. DISTORTION

All types of dirt are a form of distortion, but a "distortion pedal" alludes to the kind of extra-thick, sustaining tone associated with everything, from hard rock to metal — think 70's rock, like Kiss or Aerosmith. If you have an amp set to a clean tone, a pedal like the MXR Distortion+ will drench the sound with hard-rockin' tones for power chords and blues-scale leads.

SONG: Listen to Randy Rhoads' legendary solo on "Mr. Crowley," reputedly recorded using a Distortion+ into Marshall amps for that trebly, high-gain tone.

3. OVERDRIVE

Overdrive is an earthy, vibrant tone that comes from tube amps being cranked to incredible volumes. The essence of an overdrive *pedal* is that it accentuates the natural sound of tube amps, rather than smothering it in heavy distortion.

There's no one, universal overdrive tone, but you can hear the sound of tubes working overtime on everything, from B.B. King's sweet-toned, "Sweet Little Angel", to Eric Clapton burning up a Marshall on Cream's, "Crossroads." Steve Ray Vaughan deployed an Ibanez TS-808 or TS-9 overdrive pedal with Fender, Marshall, and Dumble tube amps to create his fat Stratocaster tones.

SONG: Check out Stevie Ray's sweet, natural Strat tone on "Pride & Joy." That's classic overdrive — not too distorted, but not clean either. Just *fat*.

4. SATURATED GAIN

The arrival of Eddie Van Halen in 1978 signaled a hot, new guitar tone in hard-rock circles. The sound of saturated gain was razor-sharp and featured avalanches of sustain and distortion. In the following years, many guitarists had their Marshall heads "modded" to achieve the maximum crunch, as few off-the-shelf models had caught up to the phenomenon (aside from Mesa/Boogie).

By the mid-80's, that searing, liquid tone became a tonal standard in the hands of shredders, like Yngwie Malmsteen, Joe Satriani, and George Lynch. It was first exemplified in stompbox form through the Boss Heavy Metal pedal and ProCo Rat, but today, there are zillions of hi-gain boxes out there.

SONG: Racer X's Paul Gilbert and Bruce Bouillet scorched more than a few tubes in the wild instrumental, "Scarified."

5. POST-CRUNCH

Thanks to tone-monsters like Dimebag Darrell of Pantera, Alexi Laiho of Children of Bodom and the guitarists of Mastodon, today's heavy guitarists use sick levels of dirt, far beyond the realms of simple fuzz and distortion. Thirty years ago, Metallica pioneered the "scooped mid" tone with pumped-up bass and treble EQ frequencies, pulling down the mids for a beefy, hollow wall of doom — some call it the "frying bacon" tone. Today, many of these tones can be found in not just pedals, but also software amps run via computers and even smartphones.

SONG: Pantera's, "Walk", features blistering riffs and lead licks from Dimebag Darrell, all of which hinted of the kind of massive crunch we hear today.

SUFFICE TO SAY, DIRT IN THE 21ST CENTURY IS THE WILD WEST OF TONE. ANYTHING EXTREME IS FAIR GAME, FROM RETRO FUZZTONE AND LO-FI, BATTERY-SPUTTERING GUNK — TO FULL-BORE CRUNCH. SO WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? IT'S TIME TO GET DOWN 'N' DIRTY, FOLKS.

Pete Prown is the leader of Guitar Garden, which has several CDs to its credit, as well as a veteran guitar journalist. He also writes fiction, available at **www.peteprown.com**

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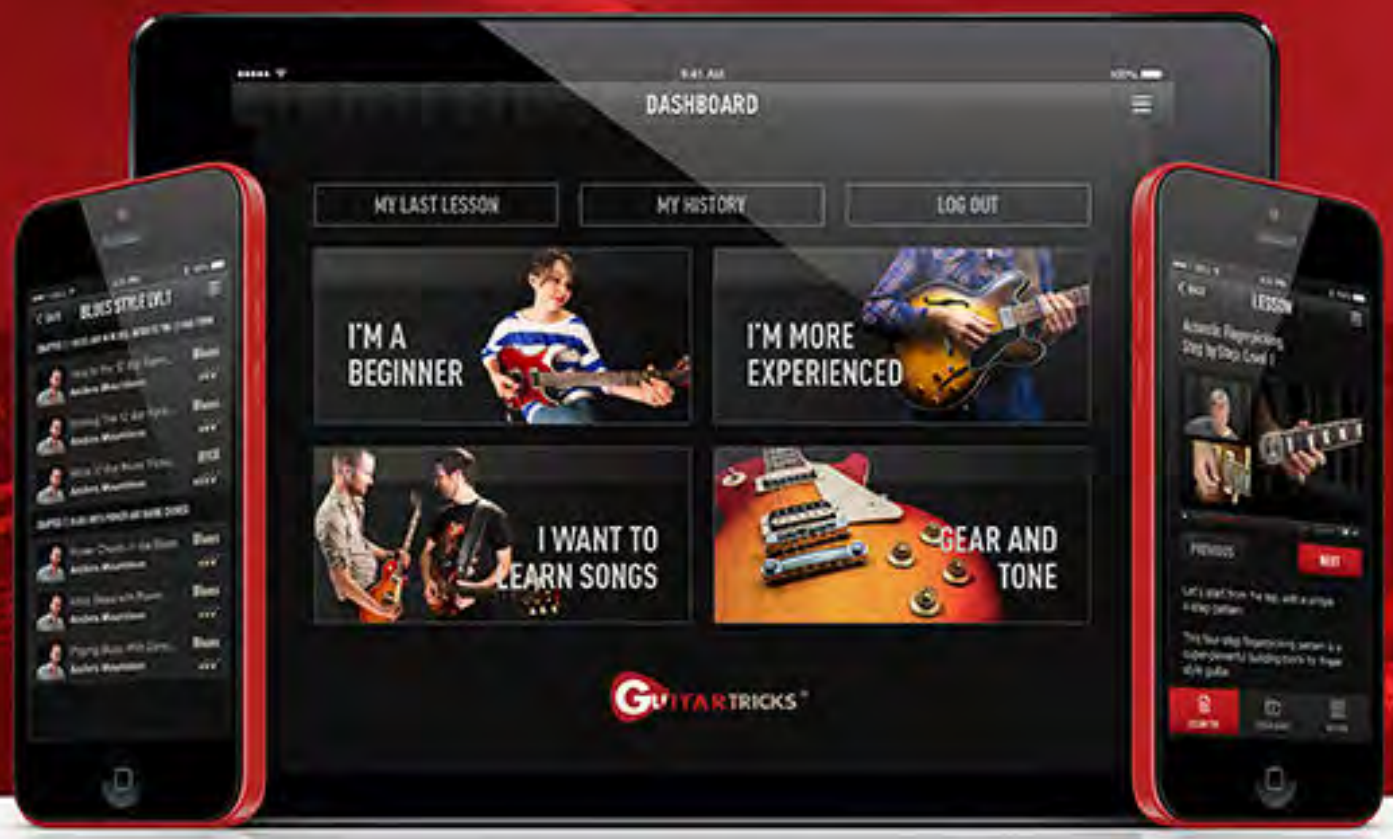

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Watch this tutorial for an easy way to add some spice to the minor pentatonic “box” blues shape with notes from the major scale. We will use the A minor pentatonic scale and a 12 bar blues form in A major. It’s an easy lesson that will improve your blues playing, as well as your soloing. Give it a try!

CLICK HERE FOR FULL FREE LESSON

FAITH FKV NAKED VENUS CUT/ELECTRO

REVIEW BY **DAVE CELENTANO**

SRP $749
STREET PRICE $599

Multi award winning British guitar manufacture Faith Guitars might not be a big name in the U.S. yet but they're well on the way. What the rest of the world has known for over a decade is that the company makes exquisite and affordable great sounding acoustic guitars. Faith Guitars' reputation began in the UK fourteen years ago and quickly attracted renowned guitar luthier and designer Patrick James Eggle who joined the team in 2005. Rapidly expanding to other parts of Europe and the globe, the company is now poised to conquer west of the Atlantic. In spring 2015 Faith Guitars struck an exclusive deal with Connolly Music to distribute their line of acoustic guitars in the U.S.A.

For review I checked out their best selling "Naked Venus Cut/Electro" (acoustic/electric cutaway) from the Naked series, a price conscious line that uses the same high level of craftsmanship and materials of other Faith series but foregoes items like pinstripe binding, high gloss finishes,

and fancy fret-board inlays, thus giving the instruments a clean organic appearance. Like a Greek goddess, Naked Venus lures attracters in with superb playability and a seductive price tag. Foregoing glamour and glitz, the guitar is literally stripped down to its essence while delivering a beautiful tone and victorious craftsmanship. The guitar is handmade in Indonesia using all solid woods with traditional luthier methods and meeting every high expectation of Faith Guitars.

FEATURES

The Naked Venus appearance is humble with a single Faith style 'F' inlay at the 12th fret, 2mm abalone rosette, and satin finish giving this instrument a clean but sharp look without ignoring important architectural features of higher quality guitars. Faith Guitars claims a satin finish allows the body to resonate more freely, producing a livelier sound than guitars with lacquer finishes, and after playing the Naked Venus I can't argue.

Straight out of the case Naked Venus was in tune and ready for action. The mahogany neck has a rosewood fingerboard with slightly lower than usual action making it extremely comfortable to play and fret buzz free, while the satin finish allows effortless navigation up and down the fingerboard, eliminating the sticky feel of high gloss necks.

No laminate woods here. All Faith Guitars instruments use solid tonewoods to deliver an immediate satisfying sound that, like a fine wine, continues to blossom with age and meaning the guitars tone will improve with time. Naked Venus has a solid Sitka Spruce top, solid mahogany back and sides, and proprietary X-brace design that collectively produce a beautiful resonance and timbre.

Accoutrements include unbranded Grover tuners, a NuBone (by Graph Tech) nut and compensated saddle that increase sustain, harmonic content and volume, on-board electronics package (powered by two CR2032 batteries) mounted on the side of the guitar which includes bass, treble, volume, phase (helps eliminate feedback issues), battery check and tuner, plus a Shadow "Nanoflex" pickup seated under the saddle. Unlike typical pickings the unique Nanoflex pickup captures the vibrations of the strings and body of the guitar collectively.

Acoustically or plugged in, the guitar has a loud voice with well-balanced lows and highs, and a pronounced midrange that sits easily in a recording mix and makes a perfect accompaniment for a band situation. Whether strumming chords or picking fingerstyle, the tone is clear, responsive, warm, and opens up wonderfully when you dig in. ■

VERDICT

Across the board Naked Venus easily rivals guitars three times the price and is a superb choice for any player looking to take a serious step up without breaking the bank. The future looks bright for Faith guitars in the USA as more players get their hands on these fine instruments. Guitarists in America will finally get a chance to play these well-crafted instruments and hear for themselves what all the excitement is about!

TONELOUNGE RIPTIDE ELECTRIC GUITAR

Review By **Dave Celentano**

DIRECT PRICE $1800 BASE PRICE AND UP TO $2400 WITH ADDITIONAL UPGRADES

ToneLounge electric guitars are custom made to order and consequently won't be found hanging in your local music store. These visually and aurally enticing guitars are for players serious about their tone and want a reliable workhorse that looks classic, feels and plays great, and will hold up under the pressures of gigging and studio work. Hand-made in Southern California, USA, the name fittingly describes a company whose creed is building outstanding sounding guitars that merge a classic past with modern technologies of the present for music of the future, all while reflecting the laidback surfer attitude of SoCal beach communities and honoring the distinct SoCal reputation for being one of the worlds leaders in guitar making.

ToneLounge owner/proprietor and music industry veteran Brian Swerdfeger got the guitar making bug back in the 80's while playing at Disneyland. His first exposure to a guitar factory came via Leo Fender himself at G&L

and has since collaborated with many other guitar manufacturers in the business. Just four short years ago he turned a crazy vision into reality and launched ToneLounge with the goal of pursuing a dream and sharing his passion for guitars with others.

Currently ToneLounge has three base models to choose from. With attractive coastal names like Riptide, Shoreline, and Element, there's something for everyone and all can be tailored to the player's specific tastes including choice of pickups, bridge, body wood (usually Alder or Swamp Ash), fingerboard (Maple or Rosewood), fret material (stainless steel or nickel), and paint color or finish type (contact ToneLounge.com for specifics on all). This review focuses on the Riptide while shining a small spotlight on the other two models. The word 'riptide' arouses scenes of surfers navigating a pipeline off the shores of Southern California or Hawaii, bikini babes on the beaches, plenty of waves, and of course surf guitar music. And like two opposing ocean currents 'Riptide' the model aims to pull your music in new and unpredictable directions, unlocking the creative spirit and ultimately the freedom to be truly unique.

FEATURES

For starters, pickups usually hang from a frame or pickguard, but not on here. The pair of retro style TV Jones Classic pickups are screwed directly to the body adding tone, a nice midrange honk, and plenty of sustain. Riptide is built like a tank with Gotoh 18:1 tuners, a TonePros AVT-II bridge, metal control panel plate for pickup selector switch, volume and tone knobs, and jack input, and feels every bit as solid as it looks. Upgrade with a Bigsby vibrato and modern locking roller-bridge that stays in tune and you've got the ultimate hotrod recipe for playing any type of music.

Outstanding paint jobs and clear lacquer stains aren't the only body options at ToneLounge (check out social media links below). The

Riptide I received for review had a contoured body with a striking butcher-block appearance composed of several woods. The centerpiece is figured Maple flanked by Rosewood, Black Limba (Korina), and Empress, which collectively look awe-inspiring and resonate magnificently. The non-toxic clear finish is hand rubbed giving it a slight satin finish appearance that lets the woods natural beauty prevail. Who would want a paint job on a guitar like this?!

Scoop on the other two models:
'Shoreline' reflects the easy-going west coast lifestyle in looks and flexibility. True to the California spirit this model features three single coil pickups, but can be configured to any type and combination thanks to a unique open pickguard design. Shoreline sports a top-loading half-T bridge or can have a modern vibrato with steel saddles and push-in whammy bar. The scale length is 25.5".

Similar to a Les Paul or Melody Maker, 'Element' has a slightly spongier feeling 24.75" scale Mahogany neck, Mahogany body, and Rosewood fingerboard making a perfect match for a pair of PAF or P-90 pickups. Guaranteed mid range punch for serious howl and growl or bring it down with some sweet slow blues. Sure to bring out the rock and roller in any player!

All ToneLounge guitars come with a deluxe padded gig bag and strung with light gauge Elixir strings (0.10-0.46).

VERDICT

Everything about Riptide says comfort and class. From the contoured body and slim and easy to play neck with well manicured frets to the retro looking headstock logo, smokin' hot TV Jones pickups, and superb finish/paintjob, this guitar is ready for a top down test drive along the coast. Riptide can handle jazz and blues as well as classic and indie rock without missing a beat, and would be right at home impersonating your favorite Dick Dale or Ventures tunes. Between three base models ToneLounge offers and almost limitless hardware and accessory options, there's virtually something for every player. For more info, photos, and videos check them out on:

www.Facebook.com/ToneLounge
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www.ToneLounge.com

TRUETONE®

V3 JEKYLL & HYDE DISTORTION FOOT PEDAL

Review By **Dave Celentano**

STREET PRICE **$179**

Visual Sound founder and owner Bob Weil introduced a baseball home plate shaped Jekyll & Hyde overdrive/distortion pedal in 1997 and hit a grand slam with guitarists. It was billedas the first-ever dual effect pedal giving players two independent distortion options in one convenient pedal. Now, nearly two decades later, the company has officially changed their name to Truetone, which more accurately describes their mission, and retooled inside and out several of their products including a new and improved "V3 Jekyll & Hyde" overdrive/distortion pedal offering a new look, increased flexibility, and superior overdrive and articulate hi-gain tones.

BRIGHT
A - B
VOICE
Jekyll & Hyde
Overdrive - Distortion
TRUETONE

FEATURES

Visually, the old home plate appearance is pitched for a durable rectangular shape that fits comfortably in pedal boards and takes up less space than two separate effect boxes. Sonically, the pedal has been reworked from the ground up making several improvements that will please modern as well as classic players.

The overdrive side (Jekyll) is completely redesigned to be more congruous with the "Hyde" side, producing classic rock/blues tones and generally lighter distortion. In addition to Drive, Tone, and Volume knobs, the channel now has Bass and Clean Mix knobs, with the dual functioning Tone knob adding gain and hi-end as it's turned up. The distortion side (Hyde) is the same as the original pedal and includes Bass, Mid, Treble, Hi-Gain, and Volume knobs, plus Bright and Voice two-way switches for additional tone sculpting. The latter is new to this version and allows you to choose between classic distortion and a slightly compressed and saturated tone. This channel is where the hi-gain tones live for pure metal madness.

One practical pedal application might be to set the Jekyll side with light overdrive for rhythm and Hyde a bit louder and more distorted for solos. What makes this pedal truly unique though is the two sides were designed to work together with surprisingly delicious results. With a bit of experimenting they can be combined to create blissful searing lead tones with tons of gain and harmonics for completely over the top sick distortion.

Each channel has it's own on/off custom Forever Footswitch (rated for 10 million stomps!) and separate inputs and outputs allowing the user to place other effects in between the two sides, change their order in the chain, or run each separately. And for further tone tweaking, on/off switches for a Pure Tone buffer circuit and Noise Gate (to minimize white noise) are located inside the unit and accessed by removing the bottom cover of the pedal. The unit is powered by one 9-volt battery or a highly recommended "1 Spot" power supply (sold separately) and comes with a lifetime warranty that's transferable to second and third owners. How cool is that? ■

VERDICT

Truetone's V3 Jekyll and Hyde pedal is arguably the most versatile all encompassing overdrive distortion pedal on the market. I call it the Swiss Army knife of distortion stomp boxes - morphing into almost any overdrive/distortion tone you can dream of. If you're looking for a distortion pedal or you own a previous J & H version, I strongly urge you to check out the new "V3 Jekyll and Hyde." It won't disappoint. But don't take my word for it. This might just be the last distortion box you'll ever purchase.

Dave Celentano teaches private guitar lessons in the Los Angeles area, authored a multitude of educational guitar books, dvds, and internet tutorials, and released several cds. His latest books "Michael Bloomfield Legendary Licks" and "Triads for the Rock Guitarist" are available everywhere and his latest cd "Desert Storm" is available on iTunes, Amazon.com, and CDBaby.com. For more info check out Dave's web site: **www.davecelentano.com**

Focusrite®

Scarlett 2i2

Review By **Pete Prown**

STREET PRICE **$149.99 list**

Though Focusrite is well-known for its legendary professional-studio gear, they've also gotten into the home-studio market with a variety of computer interfaces. Among their offerings is the Scarlett 2i2, a small, portable box with a lot of options. Let's plug in and get going.

A USB interface, as you might guess, is the device that takes your analog signal (microphone or direct guitar, bass or keyboard input), and coverts it into digital audio for editing and mixing on your laptop or desktop computer. The Scarlett 2i2 makes this process as easy as possible with a simple USB cable between the unit and your PC or Mac. Download the appropriate drivers (PC) or tweak the system preferences (Mac), and off you go. Couldn't be easier — in fact, the Scarlett 2i2 user most likely wants a plug 'n' play box that will get them recording quickly. Focusrite further provides a DAW and various software plug-ins and loops to capture and manipulate your audio tracks. Lastly, you can monitor the sound via either headphones or stereo outputs to powered monitors.

FEATURES

The front end of the box includes the critical controls to get the job done. You get two "combi" inputs, which accept both 1/4-inch jacks (guitar, bass, keyboard) or XLR (balanced lines for microphones). These preamps leverage Focusrite's famous reputation for low-noise, high-quality audio — indeed, you've probably heard their fabled high-end preamps on just about every album or CD you own.

If you're using a condenser mic that requires phantom power, the Scarlett has you covered — just push the 48v button on the front to provide electricity to the microphone. You also get switches underneath each input to choose between LINE (line-level inputs, like keyboards) or INST for guitars and basses. There are "halo" indicators around the Gain knobs for each channel — they glow green if you input signal is on the money and red if you're overdriving the gain and causing clipping or distortion. If you see red, bring down your input gain. Another front switch, called Direct Monitoring, allows you to hear your input signal directly through the headphones or your studio monitors, so there's little chance of "latency" (a slight delay) when laying down tracks. Latency can be seriously distracting, so this tool might just save your session.

As this is the 2nd-generation of the Scarlett 2i2, you get plenty of software to assist you, including Pro Tools | First Focusrite Creative Pack and Ableton Live Lite, Softube Time and

Tone Bundle, Focusrite's acclaimed Red Plug-in Suite, and 2GB of Loopmasters samples for drums and rhythm loops. These mixing, loops, and effects software packages will be of incredible use as you start recording tracks, notably for the various reverb, compression, EQ, and delay offerings to give your tracks a professional sheen. One goal of the Scarlett 2i2 is to let musicians cut complete songs whether they're working alone or tracking with a band (for the latter, if you were recording more than two instruments live, you might plug put everything into a separate mixer and then record the two-track output via the 2i2).

VERDICT

Our test recordings on the Scarlett 2i2 were, as promised, high-quality and easy to get started on — Focusrite wants the unit to be user-friendly and delivers in that regard. There's nothing complicated about the box and it gives you what you want: a fast and easy way to capture your music. Add in Focusrite's red brushed-metal case and big suite of software, and you can see why the Scarlett 2i2 is a home-studio winner. Whether you're cutting tracks for your own enjoyment, or a professional-sounding CD, this lil' red box will more than do the job. It's a pint-sized powerhouse. ■

Pete Prown is the leader of Guitar Garden, which has several CDs to its credit, as well as a veteran guitar journalist. He also writes fiction, available at **www.peteprown.com**

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DIMEBAG DARRELL

MY GREATEST GUITAR MOMENT

Dimebag Darrell Abbott the maximum impact metal guitarist of Pantera scorched stages with fist in face rhythm parts and explosive yet melodic soloing. Along with Zakk Wylde, he was among the next generation of guitar heroes. Feeding on the likes of Frehley, Van Halen, Rhoads and Saraceno, Dime drew on all manner of creative, focused and powerful guitar playing, to expand his personal world of heavy metal music. I asked him to write about his greatest moment on guitar. This is what he wrote. ■

Photo by Rick Gould

ONE OF MY GREATEST MOMENTS AS A GUITAR PLAYER WAS WINNING 1ST PLACE IN A GUITAR CONTEST. I WAS 16 YRS OLD AND THE PRIZE WAS A DEAN "ML"! I RAN THROUGH VARIOUS RIFFS FROM VAN HALENS ERUPTION TO RANDYS MOTHER EARTH ALL MIX'D TOGETHER ALONG WITH SOME OF MY OWN SHIT.. THAT GUITAR I WON IS STILL MY MAIN AXE! YOU KNOW, THE BLUE ONE WITH THE LIGHTNING BOLTS!!

WE HOPE *YOU* ENJOYED OUR SIXTH ISSUE.

We look forward
to sharing more with *YOU*.

TELL US WHAT *YOU* THINK!

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